

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 20

Model Year 2006 DaimlerChrysler flexible fuel vehicles are not available for purchase in California, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Vermont.

E85 gave you a lower mpg but cost less and was environmental friendly. E85 was available in most states. A vehicle that was manufactured to burn E85 or regular gas had a sticker on the window and you could tell by the VIN and didn't cost any more than a vehicle that just burned regular gas. They were all the rage in Europe and many were available only as fleet purchases in 2006. By 2008, they were more abundant and we got June a good used E85 vehicle.

It was hard to say if technology was a boon to mankind or had doomed us to an existence we didn't want. In truth, it was probably a little of both. You may recall right after the war we were expecting the phones to be back up next week, right? Didn't happen until about a week ago and by that time we were accustomed to just using radios. Which brings me back to those 20 people we radioed the Sheriff about.

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We pulled two pickups across the road, their noses coming together to form a V that pointed towards those 20 people. We got behind the trucks and waited. They were moving mighty slow and it was cold. I thought I'd freeze to death before they got into hailing distance.

"Kearny County Deputy Sheriff, state your business," Mike called out.

"Show me a badge," the lead man said.

Mike fished it out of his pocket and held it high for the man to see.

"How come you aren't in uniform?"

"The 3 of us are reserve Deputies."

"Show me."

Paul and I fished out our badges and held them up for the man to see.

"Are those real?"

"If they aren't, it wouldn't make much difference, state your business."

"We're from outside of Leoti, the town was attacked"

It wasn't the first time. Leoti is famous as one of the participants in the bloodiest county

seat fights in the history of Kansas. The Leoti-Coronado county seat fight was chronicled in the New York Times. Obviously, Leoti won and Coronado eventually became a ghost town. It is located at the intersection of highways K-96 and K-25, straight north of us. It had a prewar population of about 1,500-2,000.

"Come forward and we'll talk, but leave the gun."

The man, who looked to be maybe 40 and was dressed in clothing I'd associate more with a farmer than a businessman, handed his rifle to the woman beside him who held it at port arms. Big man, maybe 6'3, 225 pounds, as much as we could tell with the clothes he was wearing. He stepped forward and visibly relaxed when he saw we had women with us, never mind that they had guns.

"Jacob McLintock," he said extending a hand.

"Big Jake?"

"That was Jacob McCandles, but some call me that."

That was a relief; he didn't look anything like John Wayne.

"State your business, Jake."

"We lived south of Leoti. I don't know who it was, but a bad bunch came in Wichita County and turned Leoti upside down, killing, raping, all manner of evil. We lit out but had to come on foot; we didn't have any fuel for our vehicles. We heard that down in Lakin, things were almost back to normal. Mister, we walked about 30 miles, can you help us?"

"Who was that woman you gave the rifle to?"

"My wife, Maureen."

Weird, Maureen O'Hara played opposite John Wayne in McLintock and Big Jake. They made 5 movies together, mostly because she was a favorite of Director, John Ford.

"Ask her to come forward, and she may bring the rifle."

"Maureen, honey, come here, and bring the rifle."

"Mrs. McLintock?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Tell us how you happened to come here."

"Leoti was attacked; we barely got off the farm in time. Can you help us, we're cold, wet, hungry and tired?"

"How many families?"

"Three."

"We'll help, let us turn the pickups around and y'all pile in. Sheriff, Mike Jenkins, its ok, but Leoti has been attacked."

No we didn't ask if they were Methodist, Christian Charity knows no denominations. It had to be Intelligent Design, who was going to call God dumb? We took them back to Mike's and Rachel made a big pot of coffee and oatmeal, just to warm their innards. June, Marilyn and she next started a huge pot of beef stew and Mike fished out a pint of White Lightning for the men, that would warm them up.

"Damn, Pilgrim, that'll put hair on your chest," Jake said after sampling the brew.

"Jake, the Sheriff will probably have to try and get the Kansas National Guard to relieve Leoti; it's only a 10 person department."

"Figured as much. Say, have you seen anything of the National Guard?"

"Not once since the war."

"It's plain that we can't go back home until somebody does something. You folks seem to be making out ok."

"Among the 3 of us, we're going to be farming 3 sections this coming year, mostly growing soybeans for biodiesel and large gardens to help feed the people in Lakin."

"And you haven't had any trouble?"

"Well, a group of bikers decided to party in Deerfield on Independence Day, but it was mostly a misunderstanding; it was resolved with no shots fired."

"There were plenty of shots fired in Leoti, sounded like a lot like M16s."

"You were in the Army?"

"Yeah and I did Dessert Storm."

"Why don't you other two tell us a little about you?"

"I go first, I'm Sam Adams. Jake and I are the same age and both served in the Gulf War. Jake was farming a half section and I had the other half. This fella here lives

across the road from me, his name is Will Bonnet. He can tell you about himself."

"Well, I didn't serve in any war, fellas; I had bad feet and am color blind. I farm the quarter section across from Sam. We used up all of our diesel farming and couldn't get gas for our vehicles. I don't see how we can farm another year with what happened in Leoti and no fuel."

"We might be able to help you with the farming part, if you burn diesel, but the only gas to be available is E85 that they're planning on blending in Garden City."

"It won't make much difference unless someone cleans out Leoti," Will replied.

"If we haven't figured out something by spring, I could use help on my farm," I offered.

"The biodiesel can wait a couple of days while we make a run up to Leoti and scout out the town and get their things from their farms; it looks to me like they were traveling light. We can put them up in the triple wide for now," Paul suggested.

"We don't want to be a bother," Jake replied.

"No bother, bought the house for my son for when he graduates from school this coming spring. There's a wood furnace in the basement and bottle gas for hot water and the stove. Marilyn, do you have that old set of dishes you were going to give Don?"

"It's only a service of 8," she replied.

"I have a spare set," Rachel piped up.

"We have an old service of 12 they can use, plus my old pots and pans," June added.

"How's that stew coming?"

"It will be at least 2½ hours, Mike."

"You fellas want another sip of the White Lightning?"

They shook their heads or otherwise indicated that one sip would last them for a good while. How do I know that alcohol absorbs water? What do you think canned HEET is? Methanol. That's one of the reasons it's hard to produce pure ethanol, it absorbs water from the air. Everclear is only 190 proof, it isn't even pure ethanol. If you mix coffee and Everclear and later strain out the coffee grounds, you have Kaluha. You can make it with vodka and instant coffee, too. Absolute alcohol or dehydrated alcohol is anhydrous pure ethanol. But we knew that before we made the White Lightning. It is not possible to obtain absolute alcohol by simple fractional distillation, because a mixture containing around 95.5% alcohol and 4.5% water becomes a constant boiling mixture (an azeotropic mixture). To obtain 100% pure alcohol a small quantity of benzene is added to

rectified spirit and the mixture is then distilled. Absolute alcohol is obtained in a third fraction that distills over at 351.3° K (78.2° C or 172.67° F). It was important, the ethanol biodiesel process required pure alcohol.

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I didn't offer the Jones's place because they weren't finished moving out. After Paul had mentioned the propane stove and water heater in the new triple wide, I went into Lakin and arranged for my propane tank to be topped off. And that's how we came to ending up with 3 temporary hired hands in addition to Jason. Jake had been carrying a hunting rifle, but his kids had his AR-15s and his wife was wearing 2 pistols. They'd seen us coming and made a few adjustments in case we weren't the bad guys. He explained that he felt if we saw the AR, we might make the wrong assumption about them.

The next day, we took some fuel and a little gas and recovered some things they could use from their farms. Their kids could drive the tractors, though it would take them 2-3 hours to make the trip. We borrowed the machinery dealer's tilt bed truck and haul most of their implements down to Mike's farm to preserve them and possibly use them. It let them get their clothing and other things they might need. We sent Jason to take a look at the town. We told him not to get too close and gave him a pair of fairly high powered binoculars.

"What did you see in Leoti?"

"There were quite a few bodies lying around. There were windows broken out of some of the stores. I saw a few guys with what looked like those AR-15s. I also saw 4 school buses all painted over with graffiti."

"See any sign of law enforcement?"

"No sir."

Even though Wichita County was sparsely populated, they did have a County Sheriff. That was probably past tense, if the guys Jason saw were the bad guys. Probably were, it wouldn't be likely for the Sheriff or Deputies to be carrying Assault Rifles. We took what we knew to the Sheriff in Lakin.

"How many men did you see?"

"I didn't count, Sheriff, maybe a dozen."

"All carrying rifles?"

"Yes sir."

"Probably M16s if what Jacob said was true. We can't handle that many people armed

with automatic weapons. I've notified Troop E (Kansas Highway Patrol) in Garden City. It will be up to them to get the State Guard involved."

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State Defense Forces were few in the Midwest; the states probably couldn't afford them or thought they were duplication of the National Guard. Kansas didn't have one although the Governor had the authority to create one. There was some kind of long discourse on the subject, but what it boiled down to was a law existed authorizing the Militias referred to in the 2nd Amendment. More of us thought that the 2nd Amendment was all about the right to keep and bear arms, but some authorities claimed that wasn't a right and the purpose of the 2nd Amendment was to preserve the states' rights to maintain militias.

Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South and North Dakota and Colorado were just some of the Great Plains states that lacked State Defense Forces. We sure could have used one now. ARTICLE I, SECTION 8, CLAUSE 15: "To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions;"

Meaning of CLAUSE 15: Congress is granted the power to provide for FEDERALIZING the state militias, or "national guards" – i.e., to provide for calling the state troops into the national military service.

There are three purposes for which Congress may provide for federalizing the national guards, or state militias:

To execute the laws of the Union – i.e., to enforce national laws; National laws include: (1) provisions of US Constitutions, (2) statutes of Congress, (3) US treaties, and (4) final decisions of the US Courts.

To suppress insurrections – i.e., to put down any armed rebellion against the US national government or against the duly constituted government of any state;

To repel invasions – i.e., to defend the Country against foreign attack.

Acting under the authority given to it by Clause 15, Section 8, Article I, Congress has enacted statutes authorizing the President to employ the state militias – as well as the US Armed Forces – against "combinations of persons too powerful to be dealt with" by ordinary judicial processes.

CLAUSE 16: "To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively, the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

Application of and practice under CLAUSE 16:

Congress and the states cooperate in maintaining the state militias, or national guards.

Normally, the national guards operate under the direction of their respective states, subject to the provisions made by Congress.

When called into "the service of the United States," the national guards become parts of the US military forces and are subject to government by Congress and to the direction of the President.

When the national guards are not in the national military service, Congress can still exercise a considerable degree of control. How? Through conditions attached by Congress to federal grants of money to the states for the national guards.

When the kid won't eat, you have to spoon feed them. Anyway, the Kansas National Guard had been Federalized and wasn't available. They were probably in Kansas City, Missouri trying to help out there. Well... after New Orleans, there was some discussion of whether or not the President had the authority to Federalize National Guards without the Governors' permissions. He does, especially in the case of a national emergency. That assumes that WW III qualifies as a national emergency, Ted Kennedy claims that depends on whether the President's was a Democrat or a Republican. Hasn't he drunk himself to death yet?

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Way back when the H5N1 was on the other side of the ocean, we could have done something. The President at that time was doing a balancing act. We had \$100 billion to kill Arabs, but only \$7 billion to save the population. I wonder who dreamed up the idea to add pneumonic plague to the mix, terrorist #1 or terrorist #2. Enjoy Paradise Osama, you earned it, but it might be a bit warmer than you planned.

We loved our technology, wasn't it wonderful? Except when the equation was incomplete; a car was nice, but it needed fuel to go. They also needed parts and if it broke and the dealer didn't have the part, you cobbled it back together or got another car. There were no aftermarket kits to convert a car to burn E85 either. The cars had stainless steel gas tanks, Teflon lined hoses and different compression ratios, not a simple procedure especially in these times. We were grateful to have E85 vehicles and someone planning to produce E85 fuel. Screw the environmental benefit, we need transportation.

"Technology has brought us to this point of self-destruction," William Shatner said. "It's the dichotomy of our curiosity and greed, which are hardwired – greed, because we had to survive because we were always hungry, so we had to gather things, and curiosity, which brought us out of the trees.

"In small amounts, they're the difference between us and the rest of the animal world. In

large amounts, they're causing the destruction of everything. And I think technology has put us in a position of destroying the planet as we know it and us along with it. I'm very pessimistic about the future of mankind based on all the things that are going on now and our lack of will to correct it."

Meanwhile someone had to do something about those buttholes that raided Leoti, maybe Lakin would be next. With little other choice, we formed our own unofficial militia. If we let them get away with what they did, others might think they could get away with the same darn thing. You did know we had a significant Hispanic population didn't you? Been here a while maybe since the beginning so we asked some of them to join us too, better if we had a sampling of everybody in the militia,

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"How many people have we recruited, Randy?"

"Last count, we had about 80 Paul. We had some trouble getting weapons, so we don't have many automatic weapons. The only people that have those are moonlighting LE-Os."

"We have those dynamite grenades."

"Yeah, but we don't want to blow the town up, they already have enough to rebuild. I talked to Big Jake and got him squared away on producing ethanol and biodiesel so they won't have as big a problem with fuel. If they can get some of the E85 from the producer in Garden City, they'll have cars; otherwise, they're going to have to make do with whatever diesel vehicles they have."

"When are we doing this?"

"I was thinking next Sunday morning around 5am. They'll be partying and should mostly be passed out by then."

"Are there guards?"

"I sent Jason to check on them last weekend and he said the guards were all drunk by 4am. We can leave by midnight and make the trip to the three farms and walk from there."

"How far?"

"About 3 miles."

"Can't we get closer? That's a long way to walk in the dark in an area you don't know."

Jake knew a place we could split up about a mile out of Leoti. Sound always seems to

carry in the night, maybe it's the lack of background noise. We put off leaving until 2am; we wouldn't have to spend as much time walking. We got there in under an hour, parked and headed north. The 2 spare hours had been spent getting briefed on the layout of Leoti and determining our avenues of approach. When we got to Road Q, we split up, 2 groups going west and one east. The fourth continued slowly north on KS 25.

It took a while for everyone to get into position and then we started in on foot. We were going to shoot anyone we saw with an assault rifle. Wichita County is dry and in the Heart of the Bible Belt. However, there are 2 liquor stores in Leoti. Wet and dry refers to retail purchases of liquor by the drink. Almost caught my chest in the washing machine. We were all in place and ready to move in around 3:45.

"Let's do it," Big Jake said.

"Head 'em up, move 'em out," Paul radioed.

Damn, is Eastwood here too? I hope he's wearing his Gunny uniform. It started to snow as we moved in. There are several ways to drink yourself to death: 1) consume so much alcohol in such a short span of time you poison yourself; 2) drink so much alcohol over a long span of time that you slowly kill your body; 3) drink and drive, but you more likely to kill some innocents than yourself; and 4) get drunk and let down your guard.

We were hoping for window number 4. Hoping hell, we were counting on it. With 22 men from each of 4 directions, we had them surrounded. "They've got us surrounded again, the poor bastards." Strange what runs through your mind when you're sneaking up on a bunch of guys armed with full auto assault rifles in the middle of the night. I was sweating and it was freezing out. As we enter Leoti, there wasn't a soul stirring, not even the guards. We found them and took them out, one at a time and always with a knife. Then we started the business-to-business and house-to-house searches.

It was organized brutality, what they did, not what we were doing, although after a while, I think that may have applied to us too. When we found towns people, we freed them and gave them the guns we took from the bad guys.

"Gut 'em, don't shoot 'em," we instructed.

Mighty strange how good Christians act when they've run out of cheeks. No it's not, Christians are people too. They are taught to be forgiving, not to let themselves get kicked around like they had been. Besides, a man might forget all about that when his family is abused by a bunch of drunken criminals. It remained to be seen how the bad guys had gotten the drop on Leoti at the outset. I told you they were temporary farm hands, and once we had the town cleared just after noon, we climbed in our vehicles and headed home.

"I'm not sure how to say this, but thanks," Will said extending his hand.

"That will do nicely Will. What are your plans now?"

"Get some sleep. Then pack up and head home tomorrow."

"What about your equipment?"

"We'll manage, you folks have done enough."

"I suppose we really ought to get back to producing biodiesel. We don't have contracts with either the City or the County so they buy on a first come first served basis, keeping their tanks topped off."

"If we can find a tanker, could we buy a load?"

"You do realize that the price we charge is \$6 a gallon, don't you?"

"So what, Jake knows how to produce it now and we just need enough to get started."

"It might help if you clean out your fuel systems before you start burning B100, it's like a solvent and you'll go through lots of filters until you system is clean."

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"Where IS the government? There's no Kansas National Guard, we haven't heard one announcement from the White House since he told us to duck and cover and the Sheriff said that the only reason there were any Kansas Troopers was because they didn't have anything better to do although they weren't being paid."

"How are they getting by?"

"Collecting the fines on the tickets when they issue them and operating E Troop on the proceeds."

"That's creative, but how can you be sure you really broke the law if they stop you when they have a vested interest?"

"They have the guns, so you just assume they're right."

Those state Troopers were probably married with families. What did you think it would be like in the aftermath? You needed a state government functioning to pay wages to the state employees and you needed law enforcement. In real life the methods adjust to meet the reality of the situation. A hundred or more years ago, law enforcement officers were allowed to accept rewards, probably because they weren't well paid.

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Things had changed and the City and County only had those revenue sources that they could collect themselves, mostly property taxes and sales taxes. There wasn't any way to get the tax revenue to Topeka, even 18 months after the war so they were forced to rely on the local tax base. If you want City and County government, you have to be able to pay the employees. We got our property taxes back by selling them biodiesel. With no mail service, we didn't worry about state or federal income taxes. Screw the feds, we weren't getting any services or funding. The same applies to the state.

Were Don and Sandy sneaking over to the triple wide to play doctor and nurse? Paul told me that the thought crossed his mind more than once, but Don insisted that they weren't. It was agreed that they'd wait to get married after she graduated from high school in just a little over a year. We weren't that much older than we would have been having children of our own. Any regrets we had had long since vanished, especially once Jim and Mary moved in.

They'd have 3 more years of school after this year and the older one gets the faster time seems to move. I was basically cranking out one 55-gallon drum of biodiesel every 3 hours, 4 times a day. Boring... In the end, we'd found that the easiest way to transfer the fuel was in 55-gallon drums because they held one batch. Whenever we got a truckload of drums, Paul would haul them to town and divide up the money based on a ratio computed from each of our input into the raw oil production. That way we didn't feel like we were getting anything for the time we were putting in.

I had said, "Fine, I'll plant our timothy, I have the seed. I'll do 20 acres of that, 40 of alfalfa, 360 in beans and 200 in corn. That will leave the home places plus 10 acres for gardening." I had miscalculated earlier; the homesteads were bigger than I'd allowed; 10 acres each, only giving me 610 acres less the 10 acres for the garden(s).

Before the winter ended, I had changed my mind, 20 acres of timothy, 20 acres of alfalfa, 480 of beans and 80 acres of corn. Paul and Mike were free to choose to plant whatever they wanted. When I discussed it with them, they said they'd plant the same except they'd plant 580 acres of beans and no corn. That would give us 1,640 acres of beans and depending on the yield anywhere from 79,000 to 118,000 gallons of oil. We were going to need more of the biodiesel processing units just to handle the oil. We might just as well distill the 190 proof alcohol ourselves and we could either sock it away in charred barrels or sell it to the company in Garden City and they could do the finished refining; anything to make a buck. I already had two, one here and the one over at the Hansen place that Jason was using. If Mike and Paul each added another processor, it would serve to even things out, by yiminy.

If I could get enough help, I might try working those Clydesdale mares a little so I wouldn't have to try and retrain them to harness. I should be able to breed them in the spring and use them for a bit before I had to stop. I had one tractor on 160 acres and only two to farm 640 acres. Six months of planting, growing, harvesting and six months

of turning what I'd grown into something I could sell. I'll bet that 100 proof whiskey would sell just fine when it was about 4 years old. (I could tell 'em, it's the real article! Genuine, double-rectified bust head. Aged in the keg, 4 years.)

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Rant On

There is hope, even after a real doom and gloom scenario. It depends upon what happens and when it happens. And should, God forbid, more than one thing happens, how those things relate to each other. Take the H5N1 pandemic, for example. It began in 2003 and by 2006; there could not have been a single person in the US who hadn't heard something about it. If they didn't know that you could take Tamiflu within the first 48-hours and most likely survive, they had to be hiding in a closet. While companies rushed to develop a vaccine, remember, we won't have a pandemic unless the H5N1 mutates. And, if it mutates, will the virus they develop now work? Probably, but why take a chance; get some Tamiflu while it's still available for around \$50 per card.

People like that crazy guy in California have been telling anyone who would listen to be prepared. In an article on CNN or one of the other multiple news sources, a doctor said, to start stocking up on food. If you plan to buy 3 cans of tuna, buy 4, etc. Stick the extra can under your bed, says he. What he was talking about is having food to deal with a forced isolation period if the flu strikes. Buy a box of powdered milk too. The crazy old man printed the article for his wife and handed it to her saying, "See, I told you so."

A flu pandemic probably won't cause the lights, water and gas to go off, hopefully, so you probably won't have to have a generator. That doesn't mean that it's not a good idea to have a generator, what if Palmdale was the epicenter of a M9 earthquake? Ever heard of the New Madrid Fault? There are hundreds of Faults in the US. There are also hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, volcanoes and really nasty storms that sometimes bring down power lines.

Taken one step further, it won't do you much good to have a standby generator that runs on natural gas if, God forbid, you should have an earthquake. Yes Virginia, you can have an LP tank in your backyard in Palmdale, it just has to be a certain distance from any buildings. Or get a gas or diesel generator, but store enough fuel. There is even a Santa Claus, in the hearts and minds of everyone; it's just that we eventually learn that Santa Claus is an alias.

How expensive are a 25# bag of pinto beans and a 25# bag of rice? Cheap enough that you should be thinking about buying 4, of each. One large box of powdered milk isn't a bad idea and if you don't get along with beans, get beano. The point is, get something because when 'they' say you can't leave your home, 'they' mean it. The grocery stores will be locked up tighter than a drum and Wal-Mart will be in the same boat. The key is incremental preparations, if you plan to wait until the last minute, you'll find that the last minute was in the previous hour. If you smoke, are you going to be forced to stop be-

cause someone else has the flu? Buy an extra carton when you can, don't wait. If you take insulin and other drugs to keep you alive, the pharmacy will be closed too!

Do you know what you can take in lieu of what you're presently taking in a THE CRAP HIT THE FAN scenario? Why not? Ask your doctor, for crying out loud.

I know that some people take me seriously because I get emails. Thank you for listening. I think that you should have a 90 day supply of all of your pills. Rotate them, everything eventually loses its effectiveness and certain things can kill you or make you very sick if they are too old, epinephrine and cyclines for example. Ask your doctor, he charges you plenty for his time, get your money's worth, but ask over time, not all at once.

In case you hadn't noticed, The Three Amigos are always about ½ prepared, but never fully prepared. In the stories they always end up borrowing this and that and never get shot for looting. Its fiction, if they tried, they'd get shot, count on it; the chances are you would too. There is a REAL possibility of H5N1 mutating and hitting the United States in as soon as 2 months (as in May or June of 2006). In my lifetime there have been several flu epidemics, Hong Kong, Asian and who remembers. I remember the Asian Flu back in '57, half my class was out of school. The dominant strain of annual flu in January 2006 is H3N2. Measured resistance to the standard antiviral drugs amantadine (Symmetrel) and rimantadine (Flumadine) in H3N2 has increased from 1% in 1994 to 12% in 2003 to 91% in 2005.

"Many nations, as well as the World Health Organization, are working to stockpile anti-viral drugs in preparation for a possible pandemic. Oseltamivir (trade name Tamiflu) is the most commonly sought drug, since it is available in pill form. Zanamivir (trade name Relenza) is also considered for use, but it must be inhaled. Other anti-viral drugs are less likely to be effective against pandemic influenza."

Ok, we'll get the flu, but a nuclear war is impossible. If that is the case, why did everyone get so upset when India and Pakistan went head-to-head a while back? Why did a High Ranking Israeli officer get his chest caught in the wringer a couple of weeks back for not excluding the possibly that they would use *all weapons* against Iran if it starts developing nuclear weapons? Or, you could have read the article in the Washington Times about the US forward basing B-2s on Guam as defense against the Chinese.

You get a basic supply that will last you for say, 3 months, and then rotate it, don't use it up because Y2K didn't happen. There are 10 or 20 earthquakes EVERY DAY in California and any one of them could be The Big One.

Oseltamivir is an anti-viral used in the treatment and prophylaxis of both Influenza virus A and Influenza virus B. Like Zanamivir, Oseltamivir is a neuraminidase inhibitor, acting as a transition-state analogue inhibitor of influenza neuraminidase and thereby preventing new viruses from emerging from infected cells.

Oseltamivir was the first orally active neuraminidase inhibitor commercially developed. It is a prodrug, which is hydrolysed hepatically to the active metabolite, the free carboxylate of Oseltamivir (GS4071). It was developed by Gilead Sciences and is currently marketed by Hoffmann-LaRoche (Roche) under the trade name Tamiflu.

With increasing fears about the potential for a new influenza pandemic, Oseltamivir has received substantial media attention. Production capacity is limited, and governments are stockpiling the drug.

Oseltamivir is indicated for the treatment of infections due to influenza A and B virus in people at least one year of age, and prevention of influenza in people at least 13 years of age. The usual adult dosage for treatment of influenza is 75 mg twice daily for 5 days, beginning within 2 days of the appearance of symptoms and with decreased doses for children and patients with renal impairment. Oseltamivir may be given as a preventive measure either during a community outbreak or following close contact with an infected individual. Standard prophylactic dosage is 75 mg once daily for patients aged 13 and older, which has been shown to be safe and effective for up to six weeks.

In May 2004, the safety division of Japan's health ministry ordered changes to the literature accompanying Oseltamivir to add neurological and psychological disorders as possible adverse effects, including: impaired consciousness, abnormal behavior, and hallucinations. Various cases of psychological disorders were associated with Oseltamivir therapy between 2000–2004, including several deaths.

On 11-11-2005 the United States FDA issued a report regarding the pediatric safety of Oseltamivir, which stated that there was insufficient evidence to claim a causal link between Oseltamivir use and the deaths of 12 Japanese children (only two from neurological problems). However, it was recommended that a warning was added to the Product Information regarding rashes associated with Oseltamivir therapy.

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The bill would provide more money for armored vehicles and nearly \$2 billion for the Pentagon to develop technology to detect and destroy makeshift roadside bombs. Also known as improvised explosive devices, these are the Iraqi insurgency's weapon of choice and the leading killer of US troops. \$2 billion, hell, I'll tell you how to do that for only \$2 million. Then, the IEDs won't be our problem. Like many Americans, I support the troops, but question the decision to keep them there for very much longer. I can assure you they won't be there after January 20, 2009, assuming they are there on November 4, 2008.

"In [the China] part of the hedging strategy, we're looking at the deployments of bomber elements to Guam on a more routine basis," he said. "We're also looking at making adjustments in our naval posture globally, shifting to six carrier battle groups in the Pacific region, given the shift in global transport and trade, as well as over the next several years shifting approximately 60 percent of our attack submarine fleet to the Pacific."

Now, why would they do that? They shouldn't believe all the Patriot Fiction they read, they might accidentally do something right.

The Rules of Life:

- 1) The grass on the other side of the fence is greener, but it's filled with rocks, broken glass, barbed wire and snakes.
- 2) God has a sense of humor, be very careful what you wish for.
- 3) The guys who dreamed up Murphy's Law got it right.
- 4) God isn't stupid; therefore, His design was intelligent.
- 5) What goes around comes around.
- 6) If you smoke long enough, you die; but if you don't smoke, you'll die anyway.
- 7) Alcohol is a natural solvent and if you pour enough of it into yourself, you'll dissolve your insides and make a fool out of yourself along the way.
- 8) All politicians take the Hypocritical Oath when they first take office.
- 9) Tired old men have 2 things to look forward to in life: getting older and getting more tired.

*Come gather around people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone.
If your time to you is worth saving,
Then you better start swimming or you'll sink like a stone.*

*Come writers and critics, who prophecies with your pen
And keep your eyes wide, the change won't come again
And don't speak too soon for the wheel's still in spin
And there's no telling who that is naming
For the loser now will be later to win.
For the time they are a-changing.*

*Come senators, congress-men, please heed the call,
Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall.
For he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled
There's a battle outside and it's raging
It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls.
For the times they are a-changing.*

*Come mothers and fathers thru-out the land
And don't criticize what you don't understand.
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is riply again
Please get out of the new one, if you can't lend your hand.
For the times they are a-changing.*

*The line it is drawn, the curse it is cast,
The slow one now will later be fast
As the present now will later be past.
The order is rapidly fading
And the first one now will be later the last.
For the times they are a-changing.*

How did Bob Dylan manage to get it so right back in the '60s? He knew Woody Guthrie!

*In the squares of the city, In the shadow of a steeple;
By the relief office, I'd seen my people.
As they stood there hungry, I stood there asking,
Is this land made for you and me.
As I went walking, I saw a sign there;
And on the sign there, It said "no trespassing."
But on the other side: it didn't say nothing!
That side was made for you and me.*

Rant Off

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Whatever happened to Shep? He grew up is all and wasn't a puppy anymore. Pretty good guard dog, though. He wasn't good with cattle or the hogs, seemingly preferring the horses the kids rode. That incident up in Leoti spooked us some. The federal government couldn't keep the Kansas National Guard federalized that long, could they? We thought militia when the guy from the extension service told us about the Sheriff's collective resistance, but it was just a plea for more reserve deputies. The few perks you got from being a reserve deputy were more than made up for when you got called up. Hadn't happened since that 4th of July thing in Deerfield, but we had to carry the radios all of the time, especially after Leoti.

By the time we finished processing the soybean oil, it was time to get the soil ready to plant the coming year's crops. Jason had been steadily plowing, disking and dragging and had most of the 480 acres under his care ready to plant. I planted and had him finish up the plowing of the fields on my original 160. Plowing is slow work, no matter the size of your plow. Of course a 6 bottom plow will turn twice as much soil as a 3 bottom plow, but what you save in time, you burn up in fuel. Not a good thing when you have to

manufacture your own fuel and can only sell what's left over.

"Are you planning on full cultivation or trash farming?"

"Jason, I thought we might cultivate the beans and corn once and let them be after that to preserve the soil moisture."

"Are you planning on using the draft horses this year?"

"Mike McGilvray brought one of his stallions down and the mares are bred but I thought we should do something with them so they wouldn't lose their harness training."

"Do you really think we're going to end up using horses to farm again?"

"Don't know, but my Ford tractor is as old as I am and one of these days, it will be just plain worn out. It's just like anything else Jason, you plan for the worst and hope for the best."

"Where are you going to get more harnesses?"

"The harness shop has been closed for several years, but the fella who owned it is still alive. So are a couple of the fellas that worked for him. They made all kinds of tack, saddles, stirrups, bridles, halters, reins, bits, harnesses, martingales, and breastplates."

"I would have thought it was a lost art."

"Might have been, but for those Amish folks. I'll bet that they're chuckling right about now, what with the shortage of fuel and parts."

At a time when many conventional farmers across the US are in desperate financial straits, Amish farms are still making money and turning a profit with a cautious disregard for get-big-or-get-out modern technology and no participation in direct government subsidies, other than those built into market prices, which they can't avoid. In fact, the Amish have been exempted from paying Social Security tax, not because they don't want to pay taxes, but because they are opposed to accepting the benefits. They resist receiving money from the government for any reason.

Not only are the Amish not fading away, they are actually thriving both financially and in numbers (the Amish community has doubled over the past 20 years to approximately 100,000 members throughout 20 states and one Canadian province). Maybe the greatest paradox and tragedy of modern society is that so many of us have become disconnected from the land that nourishes and feeds us with its beauty and bounty, and yet we experience no sense of loss. As any good farmer will tell you, Amish or not, sooner or later one reaps what one sows.

We had been hunting for horse drawn equipment since we'd bought the Clydesdales.

Museums had some and we found some on farms, eventually acquiring 3 riding plows, 3 riding disks and building tongues for our modern balloon tired wagons. One of the things we found was an old combine that had its own motor to power the machine and could be rigged to be towed by a 6 horse/mule hitch. Back in 2005, a team of Monsanto employees spent nearly 100 days, working 10-12 hour shifts picking and shucking six acres worth of corn - about 120,000 ears - by hand. Check the math, that's 20,000 ears of corn to the acre.

God Bless Cyrus McCormick, John Deer, JI Case and Hart-Parr. New Holland Company made the first hay baler around 1940. A type of baler which is less common today produces small rectangular or 'square' bales. Each bale is about 15 in x 18 in x 38 in (38 x 46 x 96 cm). The bales are wrapped with two, three, or sometimes four strands of twine and knotted. The bales are light enough for a person to handle, about 45 lb (20 kg) to 60 lb (25 kg). This form of bale is no longer much used in commercial agriculture because of the costs involved in handling many small bales. However, it enjoys some popularity in small-scale, low-mechanization agriculture like our situation.

We also found a couple of older tractors that still ran (diesel) that we could leave sitting in place to provide power for other equipment using their PTOs (Power Take Offs). Those huge round bales were difficult to handle without specialty equipment. Conversely the small square bales weighed about 50 pounds and could be dropped in the field or stacked on a wagon towed behind the baler. If you did that and hauled the hay to the barn and lifted it to the haymow, you needed several people all at once: one on the tractor pulling the baler, one on the wagon stacking the hay, one hauling wagons back and forth to the barn (either with horses or a tractor), another sticking the hay lifts into the bales, one driving the tractor (or horses) to pull the hay up and probably 2 in the haymow stacking the hay. And, Virginia, that's one of the reasons why farmers' had large families. And, if you screwed up and baled the hay too early and it was overly moist, it generated heat in the haymow and burned your barn down (spontaneous combustion).

Didn't know a simple thing like putting up hay took so many people, huh? Those old manual tie wire balers could take your hand off in the blink of an eye. They had 2 people riding on the baler feeding the baling wire into the mechanism that wire wrapped the bales. The newer twine balers saved a lot of hands. They weren't the *good old days*; they were more like the labor intensive dangerous old days. Baling wire is similar to the wire they use to tie rebar except that it is sometimes cut into straight lengths and comes in bundles for those manual tie balers; wire sizes – 11, 12, 13 and 14 gauge, lengths – 10 to 21 feet and bundles contain 125 or 250 wires. The equipment is hard to wear out and they still made baling wire right up until the war.

Baling wire, otherwise known as "farm wire" or "soft wire," is primarily used in an agricultural setting for everything from mending fences to manually binding square bales of hay, straw, or cut grass. Baling wire is commonly used in many non-agricultural applications, usually in an informal, make-do manner. It is frequently referred to as one of the basic repair materials. Typical uses range from supporting loose mufflers to patching chain-link fences. Common phrases often include baling wire as an ad hoc, fix-anything

material, alongside chewing gum, duct tape, and the cable tie.

Of course, if your still blew up, you could burn down your house, too. That's why I moved ours to the machine shed. Built small rooms and insulated them to keep in some of the heat from running the stills and the biodiesel converters. Didn't have to try and get the 55-gallon drums up the stairs anymore. So soon we get old, so late we get smart.

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Christmas came and went just like it did every year. Maybe we jumped the gun by giving those firearms to the kids when we did; it was harder getting presents every year. Who wrote the rule that said you had to spent more on Christmas this year than you did last year? If I could find him, I think I'd throttle him. Back on the gold standard, we didn't really have much inflation. We bought Jim and Mary some clothes and gave them each two of the 1/10th ounce gold coins to carry in their BOBs or whatever. I also added a roll of old Roosevelt dimes so they had change.

The old saw is that if you build a better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door. If you get a good idea about how to solve your fuel problem, many will copy you and there goes your market. Nothing lasts forever and this would be the last year we planted a big crop of soybeans. We had to get the crop rotation kicked in because we didn't have all of those agricultural chemicals. Next year, it would be $\frac{1}{6}$ oats, $\frac{1}{6}$ barley, $\frac{1}{3}$ corn and $\frac{1}{3}$ grasses of one kind or another.

Those mares were big enough now to fit the harnesses to them that McGilvray sold us. We could use them for pulling wagons, for a while. We wouldn't want to lose any of those high priced Clydesdale foals. I figured that since most Clydesdales end up about the same size, I might be able to get by with duplicating the harnesses, but the old harness maker in Lakin said draft horses could probably use one of two sizes of harness and it would be better to wait. He, or one of his former employees, could fashion quality harnesses out of synthetics that would outlast leather and be less expensive.

A mistake many beginning horse farmers make is failing to allow for special conditions under which teams must work. You can't assume that a certain number of horses will handle a certain implement under any and all conditions. A team of Haflingers (originally ~13.3 hands) may easily pull a 12" plow in moist, stubble ground, while an 8" or a 10" plow might give them trouble in dry, alfalfa sod. A grain binder in clean, dry wheat on hard ground will pull easier than the same machine in weedy or lodged wheat on soft ground.

The contour of the land can also affect the amount of power needed. Over hilly land, an implement is harder to pull uphill and tougher to hold back when traveling downgrade. Now that we've established that there are no hard and fast rules about what size equipment can be used with a given amount of horse power, we can put forth some general guidelines.

Tillage can be easily carried out by a single horse or, better yet, by a light team. The equipment used is smaller, and progress is slower, but it can be done. The old John Deere and International Harvester catalogs for horse-drawn equipment recommend a 10" plow for one horse, 12" for a light 2-horse team, and 14" for a regular 2-horse team. New 12", 14" and 16" walking plows are available from Pioneer Equipment, and I&J Equipment offers an 8" walking plow. Almost any size walking plow may be found at farm auctions. A small team should be able to handle a 12" sulky plow in ordinary conditions, and these are sold new by Pioneer and White Horse Machine.

Both spring tooth and spike tooth harrows can be purchased new from Pioneer Equipment. An old rule of thumb is one harrow section per horse. Small disc harrows are offered by Groffdale Machine and Kota Manufacturing, and 4' or 5' single gang disc harrows might be found at farm auctions.

A cultivator that straddles a single-row would require a team, while a single horse could pull a hand cultivator that goes between two rows, such as the one sold by I & J Manufacturing.

A team would be sufficient to operate a mower with a 5' cutter bar, but a single animal would be better off with a 4' machine. I know of no source for new horse-drawn mowers, but used and rebuilt ones – usually McCormick-Deering or John Deere – can readily be found.

Side delivery hay rakes and tedders can be bought new from most equipment dealers, including I&J Equipment and Pequea Machine. I&J's side rake is ground driven, as are Pequea's hay tedders, and may easily be pulled behind a forecart by a light team.

A two-row corn planter and a small 9- or 10-row grain drill are two-horse machines. A one-row corn planter and a five-row grain drill, meant to be pulled by one horse, were once built by most of the major manufacturers, and used ones can still be found.

Corn and grain binders were often pulled by medium- and large-sized teams of two horses, but three- and four-horse teams were more efficient and provided enough power to make the ground-driven mechanism work properly. Pulling a wagon and hayloader might be practical on flat land, but would be a big load for a single horse or a team in hilly Country.

During the early days of mechanical grain threshing, machines were often driven by one or two animals on a treadmill. These machines basically threshed the grain from the heads. Winnowing – or separating the grain from the chaff and straw – was accomplished by hand or with a fanning mill. In the last half of the 19th century – as threshing machines were improved by the addition of cleaning fans, self-feeders, straw walkers, and wind stackers – power requirements increased until 8, 10, and 12 horses were needed to run the things. I suppose that if you could find one of the early, small, wooden threshers, you could get by with your one or two animals.

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 22

The used machinery mentioned above can be found at farm sales, especially in areas where horse farming is popular. These same areas will usually have a number of implement dealers who specialize in finding, refurbishing, and reselling horse machinery.

In theory, if the farm is too large, you're better off farming with tractors than horses. It is based on the theory that you need 6 horses to farm about 75 acres and 1 teamster for every 6 horse team. Using that formula, you'd switch from horses to a tractor at 175 acres. Stated a different way, you could farm a quarter section just fine with horses. However, with a scarcity of fuel and tractor parts in the future, how practical was that? Did everyone think that in the aftermath of World War III the Country would just pick itself up and dust itself off and go on like nothing happened? It might, over the course of 50 – 100 years.

There was no un-punching the buttons that destroyed China and the US and later other countries. We exist within our environment and if that environment doesn't include factories capable of refining fuel or producing parts, then we are forced to basically start over. With good luck, the wind turbines would keep us in electricity for twenty years, each. And hopefully, in 40 years we could once again get wind turbines. I don't know about Mike's solar panels. What were the people in Lakin going to do when they lost their electricity? I'm not talking about running out of natural gas, but about the parts they'll need when one of the machines or generators breaks or wears out.

If that environment includes colder winters and warmer winters, we adjust or go hungry. Some things weren't to be had, no matter how desperately you wanted them, like anhydrous ammonia. Anhydrous ammonia is made from natural gas (methane), LPG (propane and butane) or naphtha. Constraints on the weather affect the crops too, and we were pushing it planting soybeans 2 years in a row without the necessary nutrients to add to the soil. However, the 3rd year, we have one hell of a corn crop. Crop may be divided into nitrogen fixing and nitrogen consuming. That's why the crops are rotated in a certain order with the consuming plants planted after the fixing plants.

As I told you earlier, soybeans should follow corn, wheat, barley or other grass crops in a rotation to minimize disease carryover and to optimize the nutrient utilization within the soil profile. Soybeans should not follow alfalfa, dry edible beans, canola, or sunflower where white mold disease has been detected. We could plant soybeans where the corn would be planted this year and lots of alfalfa, timothy, oats, barley and corn. If that guy in Garden City could get enough gasoline, he could produce a lot of the highly stable E85.

We were just trying to stay one step ahead of the market, not one step behind. Furthermore depending on the available labor supply we could always sacrifice a little corn and increase the garden. We made certain to hold back plenty of potatoes because they are one of the largest components in the American diet. I couldn't remember if potatoes increased 10 fold or 20 fold. The essential part of the potato was the eye and you didn't

have to cut up the entire tuber. Deeply excised eyes were more than enough, leaving extra potato to turn into alcohol or even hog feed. And speaking of alcohol, you use the sour mash method to provide yeast for the subsequent batch of mash.

Farming is more than a vocation; it's a way of life. If you have cows, you have to milk them in 12-hour intervals, and they don't take weekends off. Even Amish farmers use milking machines if they have large herds. They generally shun electricity but a wind turbine uses natural energy and some of them have those. In the US, there are Amish communities in nearly every agricultural state. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Iowa are just a few of their several communities. It's good to know because their most powerful *tractor* is 6 horsepower. They don't refuse to deal with the *English* and give probably more respect than they get. Excellent craftsmen, let me tell you. They even had websites, maintained of course by the *English*. *Witness* gave an accurate portrayal of Amish life.

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As long as we had homemade diesel fuel and the tractors didn't breakdown, we were set. It gave us the time we needed to expand our herds of Clydesdales and riding horses. Didn't seem to hurt the Amish none, avoiding cars and such. An Amish will ride in a car belonging to the *English* if necessary, they just won't own any. Figure a horse is full grown when you can breed 'em. Our herd now included the 4 Morgan mares, the two Morgan stallions, the colt and 3 fillies, plus 4 4-year old Clydesdale mares, also bred. According to that fella's formula, we need 24 draft horses to farm a section, if it ever came to that.

I didn't doubt that it would, given the rate at which the Country wasn't rebuilding itself. It was bits and pieces now with the cleanup of the big cities taking longer than anyone thought. Topeka finally found itself and was sending riders around measuring the needs of each community, all 628 of them (105 Counties). Kansas needed money, badly, and with no one filing tax returns, the till was empty. The Governor declared a Tax Amnesty, just file the returns and there would be no penalties or interest. The returns were to be turned into the County and they'd be collected. The state would accept gold, silver or cash only, no checks. It occurred to me that they were a bit behind the curve but it was a good way to unload the mostly worthless FRNs.

Don graduated and asked Sandy to marry him after she graduated the following year. She said something verging on, "It's about time," before she said yes. Jim and Mary adapted to living on the farm and Mary told June, Jim and she really appreciated our finding a place for them and that we were the best substitute parents they'd ever had. One day they'd own everything, however in the meantime, they each were allow to choose a foal as their own horse. Jim wanted the stallion, leaving Mary to choose one of the 3 fillies.

Shep stayed near the house, unless Mary went somewhere. While it was clearly understood he was their dog, maybe Shep decided that Mary needed the most companion-

ship or protecting. He was getting big; I wouldn't want to be on the other side of those teeth. That, more or less, leads into a discussion of our security. With enough help, our fences were sound and we could pretty well see the entire section from anywhere. The only two areas fenced beside the perimeter were the pasture and the garden. Can you imagine wearing a gun to plow a field?

When Ray finally turned 21, the Sheriff made him a reserve deputy too. The Sheriff seemed to have his own ideas about what constituted a local militia so he'd check a prospective candidate out in his own way and if he was satisfied, give them a badge and swear 'em in. It wasn't quite in full compliance with Kansas law, but the Sheriff seemed satisfied. Word was he'd told the bikers they could party at the lake anytime, provided they let him know and checked their guns, but no dope.

The winter wasn't as bad as the previous and we were in the field early, planting according to what we worked out over the winter. We weren't using hybrids and although it reduced the yields, we had seed stock for each year that followed. Several of the young people from the Lakin Public Schools volunteered to work in the 3 large gardens for a share of what we produced. Considering that the gardens all ran about 10 acres, we took all of the help that we could get. Even if you plow up your backyard, I doubt you can produce enough food for a family for a full year.

One of the problems that began to surface was the lack of pharmaceuticals. Doc Williams had basically run out of alternatives and the drugs stores couldn't get meds from their suppliers and the suppliers couldn't get them from the distributors. Doc and the Board at the hospital had seen it coming and had stocked up the best they could before the flu and the war. They had pushed the expiration limits to the ragged edge but Kearny County had a drug problem and it wasn't meth. Doc claimed that with nearly 700 drug wholesalers in Kansas, he'd find something, assuming it was there to find. Gunny Highway is never around when you need him.

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"Life is a bear," Paul observed.

"And then, you die. Planting done?" I asked.

"Just finished up. Are we going to get the rain we need this year?"

"Maybe and maybe not. How is Mike coming?"

"They'll be done today. Got your garden in?"

"It's a big sum bit, still planting. How many school kids did Marilyn and you get?"

"About a dozen. I think we all got about the same. I meant to tell you, the store was re-purchasing the empty quarts and pints and we should have plenty. They got a mixed

load in from the warehouse and it included more jars and lids. You know, I think I'll plant wheat next year, it has been a while."

"I was thinking of generally keeping to a mix of soybeans, barley, corn and the various types of hay we'll need."

"Well, Mike said he was mostly going with corn. A guy in Garden City is trying to get an engine to run on pure ethanol, like Henry Ford did," Paul explained.

"I find it strange that it took a war to clean up the environment. Those petroleum companies really had a lock on our economy."

"Aided by Detroit, Randy. I think that it finally took Chávez getting elected in Venezuela to force the President to take a hard look at our energy problems. The US was being blackmailed by the Arabs and Chávez. That war was all about oil, Vietnamese oil. Darned few Californians left to complain about our recovering the oil off their coast and I heard that we're getting oil from the second Alaskan field now, it was on the radio."

"If we can find enough vehicles to run on E85, we won't have to worry about importing crude."

"There's enough coal to generate all the electricity the cities will need for the next couple of centuries."

"There may very well be, but many will have to replace the boilers they have with coal burning boilers. That could take one or two decades. It might not happen unless all of the environmentalists were caught in the big cities the Chinese hit. Coal is one of the true measures of the energy strength of the United States. One quarter of the world's coal reserves are found within the United States, and the energy content of the nation's coal resources exceeds that of all the world's known recoverable oil. Coal is also the workhorse of the nation's electric power industry, supplying more than half the electricity consumed by Americans."

"How much power did the Country used before the war?" Paul asked.

"Can't say. The only file I had on my computer is about 6 years old. In 2004, net generation of electricity rose slightly to 3,971 billion kilowatt-hours. For the 2005 through 2009 planning period, respondents reported 94 gigawatts (nameplate capacity) of new generators were scheduled to start commercial operation. While natural gas-fired and dual-fired generators originally accounted for about 80 percent of the planned capacity additions, that number may have decreased as other methods of generation came back into favor."

"How much of the 2004 power came from coal?"

"1,979 billion kilowatt-hours."

"I heard on TV that all of the nuclear power plants were shut down."

"Still?" I asked, surprised.

"Apparently so, people have had enough radiation to last them their lifetimes."

"I guess we can use coal to generate electricity without a lot of processing, can't we Paul?"

"All they'll have to do is mine and transport it."

"I'll bet the government gives priority to coal mining operations. That and food growing operations."

"If that's the case, why are we bothering with ethanol and biodiesel?"

"Because we save about \$5 a gallon? Or, maybe because we have 6 53-gallon barrels of whisky that we can drink one of these days. I'll put up 6 or more barrels every year."

"Is it going to be any good?"

"Well, I'll tell ya, bourbon is aged in new white oak barrels unlike the used barrels of other whiskey types. This new wood means that the bourbon draws a great deal of color and flavor from the barrel, with vanilla and caramel predominant characteristics. The climate in Kentucky in the summer gets very hot, and cold in the winter. This means that with the rapid expansion and contraction of the spirit into and out of the wood, maturing happens at a quicker rate than for example in the cool, damp climates of Scotland or Ireland. The new, white oak barrels are filled to capacity with the high wine, ready for several years of aging. The barrels are charred on the inside, giving bourbon its amber color and mellow but potent taste. Aging must take place for a minimum of two years. If aged less than four years, labeling must include age. Most bourbon is aged from four to eight years. As the liquid ages in the barrel, variations in temperature as the seasons change force it to expand and contract through the caramelized layer of charred wood inside the barrel, "mellowing" it and giving it the distinctive bourbon flavor and appearance. The liquid moves $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in and out of the 1 inch thick white oak, this is why it is important to use only NEW barrels."

"Isn't Jack Daniel's bourbon?"

"Jack is Tennessee whiskey. The whiskey is generally similar to bourbon, in that it is composed of a mash of 51 - 80 per cent corn, and is aged in new, charred oak barrels for a minimum of two years. The difference between Bourbon and Tennessee whiskey is that Tennessee whiskey must undergo the Lincoln County Process. This process requires that the whiskey be filtered through an approximately 10 foot thick layer of sugar maple charcoal. This step is considered to give the whiskey a distinctive flavor and also

makes it unusually mild. The process itself is named for Lincoln County, Tennessee, which is where the Jack Daniel's distillery was originally located." (In 1871, the Jack Daniel's distillery, and the surrounding area became part of the newly created Moore County.

"I guess we're making bourbon, we don't have 10' of sugar maple charcoal," Paul mused.

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The day that we switched to using horses to farm wasn't here, yet. It was coming, though. We need lots of horses and teamsters, to farm a section of ground. We figured it would be a steep learning curve; most of the people who had farmed with horses in this area were long gone. We all agreed that we'd keep one colt each as a backup stallion and geld the rest. The Morgan's could be trained to harness and pull buggies and wagons, just to go to Lakin.

If you think about it, in one sense, the war had been environmentally friendly. It cut the use of motor vehicles and petroleum products significantly. The day when we'd have to store the tractors was rapidly approaching, although they all burned biodiesel. I didn't believe that we'd regressed so much as we'd changed. The things that had always been important to mankind, potable water, waste disposal and food, had survived the war. We had adapted to the circumstance and were looking ahead. You wouldn't find any of us asking, "What do we do now?"

People shouldn't get the idea that we were totally self-sufficient, we weren't. We were better off than most, that's for sure. No doubt, ours was a story being repeated throughout the Country. Rural flight had a new meaning, fleeing to the Country instead of from the Country. We could get wheat from neighboring farmers and grind our own flour. Life hadn't changed that much, same food on the table, meat, taters, a veggie and home-made bread. We couldn't get cereal anymore so we made granola. Maybe I shouldn't say that, we had oats and June rolled them to produce oatmeal. I sometimes skimmed the cream and June used a powered butter churn, also known as an ice cream maker. If she used pure cream and no ice, she'd get butter and buttermilk.

Here's June's Granola recipe:

2 pounds of rolled oats
¾ cup of raisins
½ cup of almonds
½ cup of crushed walnuts
2 cups of sugar
1 cup of water
½ stick of butter
¼ cup of honey
1 tablespoon of salt

½ cup of dried cranberries

In a large mixing bowl, combine oats, raisins, almonds, and dried cranberries, walnuts, salt and honey. Stir until well incorporated. In a small sauce pot add sugar and water and simmer until slight caramel color comes to the liquid. Add butter in small pieces and stir well with a wire whisk. When butter is well incorporated pour caramel sauce over oats. Stir well and spread over a sheet pan and allow cooling. She substituted, according to what she had available.

As we increased our herds, we had more milk than we knew what to do with so we chilled it and hauled it to Lakin. Regressed? Maybe to the early part of the 20th century, but not much further back. And yes, we carried guns, not because we wanted to but because Leoti was never far from our minds. The 2 TV stations started to carry more than just the news, reruns. Some of them were the National Geographic Channel's disaster series. They were going to show *Super Tornado* tonight.

Mike, Paul and I had been spending more time on the ham radios; something was stirring in the eastern US. Federal troops had to put down a riot of some kind. I know I'm not telling the story in what would appear to be an orderly fashion, more like how it happened and some days I didn't write anything in my journal. More cows meant finding a good used milking machine setup and installing it. There aren't enough hours in the day to farm and keep track of it.

"Are you coming to bed, Randy?"

"Just as soon as I finish."

"What are you doing?"

"Trying to update the journal I started keeping back when we got into the survivalist business."

"May I look?"

"I printed most of it out, it's in that ring binder over there, help yourself."

"Not much of a journal, dear, it reads more like a fiction story."

"I'm not an author, June. What would you have written?"

"Dates, times, weather conditions, details on what you planted and the yields, stuff like that."

"I gave the yields, 70,000 gallons of biodiesel, 6 barrels of bourbon, 4 Morgan foals, it's all there."

"It's all from a man's point of view."

"I don't wear dresses."

"Good."

"I'll stop, let's get some sleep, I'm tired."

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Why is it that the bed has always been where you and the wife talk, just to fill each other in on what happened through the day? Sometimes subjects that wouldn't otherwise get discussed are discussed in the few moments before you roll over and go to sleep. Like Mary having a semi-steady boyfriend; a little young, if you ask me, but these are different times. June and I weren't mom and dad and given their ages, I doubt it would come to that. That County lady never came back, if she talked to the kids, it must have been at school.

From only 2 cows and a bull, you can build a cattle herd; it just takes a few years. From 4 Clydesdale mares and 4 Morgan mares, you can build it herd of horses and it doesn't take nearly as long, especially if most of the foals are fillies. When another farmer bit the dust, too old and no kids to take over, we bought his livestock. We picked up 42 Holstein cows and a bull. How they ever handled large dairy herds before the milking machine came along purely escapes me, must have had large families or lots of hired help, or both. I had an older milking machine, the Surge belly milker, the one with the big pot. Babson, based in suburban Naperville, contends it has held the trademark on the name Surge since 1925 for its automatic milking equipment and some industrial cleaning products (in a 1999 lawsuit against Coke over the use of the name 'Surge'). My machine was as old as my Ford tractor, but it worked, so why complain? It came with 6 pots and some extra utter cups (inflators), not much to wear out on a milking machine.

You can take the boy off the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the boy. Of course, if he hasn't been on a farm since 1954, some of his information might be a little dated. In the 1960's, pipeline milking systems replaced bucket milkers as the preferred way to milk cows in North America. Pipeline milkers require much less labor and are easier on the humans doing the milking. Pipeline systems were developed in the 1950's and 1960's. Thousands of Pipeline milking systems were installed in the 1960's and 1970's as farmer's herds were getting larger. Sales of the Surge Bucket Milker declined from 1975 to 1999. Production ended in 1999. Thousands of Surge bucket milkers are still in use today. Many are on small hobby farms or homesteads where they milk a family cow or a few dairy goats for their home use. Some are still used on smaller commercial dairy farms to milk all their cows and others are just used to milk fresh cows or treated cows on commercial dairy farms.

◦

Author's Note: Pat Hinch, from Nashua, and my dad were friends and Pat sold Surge milkers. Farm Tractor Company, my dad's Ford and New Idea business sold repair parts for the Surge milker, back in the late '50s and early '60s. The old man sold a lot of Kelly Ryan elevators, too, enough to get a trip to New Orleans, courtesy of Mr. Kelly Ryan.

"I have a Cunningham Conditioner that does a great job. But it has started to break things. (Shear bolts, universal joint and drive chain) Does anyone know where to get a manual? The rollers don't hit that much and it goes a long time before something breaks. Could it be the chain was too loose I took a half link out when it broke. Thanks for any help. Jeff"

Jeff, you don't want to crimp hay you feed to horses because the crimpers crush a beetle into the hay and that will make your horses sick. The idea was to crush the stems letting moisture out and let the hay cure faster.

o

We finally had everything in and before long would be harvesting from the garden. I used the corn planter to put 8 rows of sweet corn and they must have cut and planted a ton of spuds. I also changed the seed plates in the planter and put in 4 rows of green beans. An acre is 43,560 square feet or ~209' square. Our garden was 200' wide and 2,200' long, actually just a shade over 10 acres. Can you imagine what it must be like to pick a row of beans 8,800' long? Can you imagine how many jars of green beans the ladies canned? Most of the food available was locally grown, so the extension man encouraged different farmers to plant different crops, many for human consumption. Without all of those high school kids helping out, Mary and June would have been canning green beans until Christmas.

The 3 of us all picked up more hired hands during the summer and most of them want food and a little cash and fuel. They came to the farms in an old school bus that you could still see the graffiti on. It was one of those buses from Leoti, painted over but not enough to hide the previous markings. Paul suggested we consider building bunk houses for the day when we were forced to use those horses for farming. Well, he could afford it; I still had to finish paying off my land. The deal was simple, 10% of the original balance plus 4% interest on the unpaid balance, not compounded and due at the end of the year. That was the Jones place; the deal on the Hansen place was 50-50 of the farm profit without interest until I had Rose paid off.

How we got through that summer, I'll never know; I didn't have much time to make notes in my journal. I think maybe June had taken that over, assuming she had the time. We put a 4-horse tongue on one wagon and used the Clydesdale mares to pull a few loads of hay back to the barn. Jim drove the wagon and was getting right handy handling a fist full of reins. Because I had the only hay crops, Mike, Ray, Paul, Don and a couple of hired hands helped out putting my share in the haymow. Mike and Paul's share was towed to their farms using a tractor and stacked. What hay went to Jason, was hauled

and stacked.

o

"What do you intend to do with all of that corn, sell it?"

"Nah, I'm going to build a bigger still, Paul. I found someone to supply those white oak barrels."

"You're going to make booze? Do you know how alky-hall 200 acres of corn will make?"

"I got 150 bushels to the acre and that means I have 30,000 bushels of corn. You get 2.68 gallons of ethanol per bushel, so my best guess would be 80,000 gallons of 95% ethanol. I use some of that to process my soybeans, but I'd bet I end up putting most of it into whiskey barrels. It ought to be enough to keep everyone in the County in liquor for several years."

"I think you've tasted your product."

"I have not, it's not 2 years old yet."

I need something on the order of 1,400 barrels, about 10 times as many as was available. There was no way I was going to make that much bourbon, but I did intend to make more than 6 barrels.

What about all the alternative vehicle technologies we've been promised? Thanks to a decade-long stonewalling by Big Oil and the trucking industry, it has taken until this year to phase in clean-diesel requirements that will give automakers the slightest hope of meeting 50-state emissions requirements (diesel-powered vehicles can be 25% to 40% more fuel-efficient than gas-powered vehicles). Other technologies – biodiesel, hybrids, ethanol, plug-ins, fuel-cells – can in the near term only nibble at the edges of our 20 million barrels per day of oil consumption, or, so one reporter claimed. The claim came at the end of article I'd copied into my computer about the Mercedes 2007 full-sized SUV.

June's car ran just fine on that E85 fuel and it would run on about any mix so I planned to add ethanol to our supply of gasoline. The car had barely been driven and the tank of preserved gasoline held 1,000 gallons, enough to make over 6,667-gallons of E85. All I needed was a tank to mix the two together. Not having a spare tank was the least of my worries; I could always find an empty tank.

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 23

A long, long time ago I can still remember how that music used to make me smile and I knew if I had my chance that I could make those people dance and maybe they'd be happy for a while but February made me shiver with every paper I delivered, bad news on the door step, I couldn't take one more step, I can't remember if I cried when I read about his widowed bride but something touched me deep inside, the day, the music, died. So...

Chorus:

Bye, bye Miss American Pie drove my Chevy to the levy but the levy was dry an them good ol' boys were drinkin whiskey and rye singin this will be the day that I die, this will be the day that I die.

Did you write the book of love and do you have faith in God above, if the Bible tells you so, and do you believe in rock n' roll, can music save your mortal soul and can you teach me how to dance real slow? Well I know that you're in love with him cuz I saw you dancin in the gym you both kicked off your shoes and I dig those rhythm and blues. I was a lonely teenage bronkin buck with a pink carnation and a pick-up truck but I knew I was out of luck, the day, the music, died. I started singin...

Chorus

Now for ten years we've been on our own and moss grows fat on a rollin stone but that's not how it used to be, when the jester sang for the king and queen in a coat he borrowed from James Dean and a voice that came from you and me, oh and while the king was looking down, the jester stole his thorny crown the courtroom was adjourned, no verdict was returned, and while Lenin read a book on Marx, the quartet practiced in the park and we sang dirges in the dark, the day, the music, died. We were singin...

Chorus

Helter Skelter in a summer swelter the birds flew off with a fallout shelter, eight miles high and fallin fast, it's the land that fallied on the grass the players tried for a forward pass with the jester on the sidelines in a cast, now the half-time air was sweet perfume while the sergeants played a marching tune we all got up to dance oh but we never got the chance oh as the players tried to take the field the marching band refused to yield do you recall what was revealed, the day, the music, died. We started singin...

Chorus

Oh and there we were all in one place, a generation lost in space with no time left to start again, so come on, Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack Flash sat on a candle stick because fire is the devils only friend, oh and as I watched him on the stage, my hands were clinched in fists of rage, no angel born in hell could break that Satan's spell and as the planes climbed high into the night to light the sacrificial right I saw Satan laughing

with delight, the day, the music, died. He was singin...

Chorus

I met a girl who sang the blues and I asked her for some happy news but she just smiled and turned away, I went down to the sacred store where I'd heard the music years before but the man there said the music wouldn't play and in the streets the children screamed, the lovers cried, and the poets dreamed but not a word was spoken, the church bells all were broken and the three men I admire most, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, they caught the last train for the coast, the day, the music, died, and they were singin...

Chorus

They were singin... Bye, bye Miss American Pie drove my Chevy to the levy but the levy was dry an them good ol' boys were drinkin whiskey and rye singin this will be the day that I die.

The last word (probably) on *American Pie*:

As you can imagine, over the years I've been asked many times to discuss and explain my song *American Pie*. I have never discussed the lyrics, but have admitted to the Holly reference in the opening stanzas. I dedicated the album *American Pie* to Buddy Holly as well in order to connect the entire statement to Holly in hopes of bringing about an interest in him, which subsequently did occur.

This brings me to my point. Casey Kasem never spoke to me and none of the references he confirms my making, were made by me. You will find many *interpretations* of my lyrics but none of them by me. Isn't this fun?

Sorry to leave you all on your own like this but long ago I realized that songwriters should make their statements and move on, maintaining a dignified silence.

Don McLean
Castine, Maine

The Day The Music Died refers what happened on the night of February 2, 1959 in a plane crash in Iowa during a snowstorm. The same plane crash that killed Buddy Holly also took the lives of Richie Valens (*La Bamba*) and The Big Bopper (*Chantilly Lace*). Since all three were so prominent at the time, February 2, 1959 became known as *The Day The Music Died*. Holly's wife who was expecting at the time later miscarried. What we need from McLean now is a song titled, *The Day The Country Died*.

Maybe that's extreme, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the surviving post pandemic; post bioterrorist attack population survived the war, more than was expected. Admittedly, we hadn't seen much of the state government and the feds had all but disappeared, but they had to be out there,

somewhere, and one of these days would be coming with their hand out looking for money to rebuild the Country.

o

"FEMA's in town."

"As long as they stay there, it's fine by me."

"What are you planning on doing if they grab the truckload of food and seize it to feed the American people?"

"I'll take a couple of extra mags for the M1A."

"You'd shoot 'em?"

"They can't deprive us of our property without due process of law."

"Hah, the US Supreme Court said they could. The case is Kelo et al v. City of New London. In that case, the court held that New London, which had been designated a distressed municipality, could acquire the property of Susette Kelo and eight other residents of the city's Fort Trumbull neighborhood and use the land for an elaborate development surrounding a \$300 million Pfizer pharmaceutical company research facility," Paul claimed.

"Right and the decision inspired a national backlash, with legislators in two dozen states vowing to take measures to rule out condemnations like the ones in New London. Unfortunately, a bill was introduced in the Kansas Senate that said 'the taking of private property for the purpose of selling, leasing or transferring such property to any private entity ... for industrial or economic development shall not constitute public use.' It failed to pass the Senate," I pointed out.

I got Mike to ride to Lakin with Paul and me. I noticed that all 3 of us were very well armed. I really didn't see how anyone could take the food from us; it was destined to feed people in Lakin and Garden City. How could the needs of the many be more important than the needs of the few thousand people who were eating that food?

Then I remembered where I'd heard that before:

Spock: If I may be so bold, it was a mistake for you to accept promotion. Commanding a starship is your first, best destiny; anything else is a waste of material.

Kirk: I would not presume to debate you.

Spock: That is wise. Were I to invoke logic, however, logic clearly dictates that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.

Kirk: Or the one.

Spock: You are my superior officer. You are also my friend. I have been and always shall be yours.

Crap, we might have to shoot after all. I really didn't want to get into it with the feds, they are so many and we are so few. They have tanks and fighting vehicles, we have dynamite grenades and rifles. Better not to anticipate what might happen in Lakin or I'd end up like the guy who needed to borrow the jack, telling someone to shove it after he said hello.

"A fellow was speeding down a Country road one night when he had a blowout. The spare tire was all right, but he found that someone had taken his jack and not returned it. Looking around he saw the lights of a farmhouse, and said, "I'll just go see if I can borrow a jack from him." As he walked toward the house, he tried to rehearse his request for the jack. "I'll just knock on the door, ask for the jack, and he will say, 'Why sure, neighbor, just make sure you bring it back.'" The closer to the house he came, the more nervous he was about the response he might receive. He thought to himself, "Now, he's gone to bed and will be annoyed because I wakened him – so he'll probably want some money for the jack – and I'll say, "OK, but that's not very neighborly of you, but I'll give you a quarter." He thought to himself, "He will probably say, 'You think you can get me up in the middle of the night, and then offer me a quarter? I'll get a dollar or you can go somewhere else for your jack!'"

By now, the fellow had worked himself into a pretty good lather. When he turned into the man's gate, he muttered, "A dollar! All right, I'll give you a dollar. But not a red cent more! A poor guy has an accident and all he needs is a jack. You probably won't let me have one no matter what I pay. That's the kind of guy you are." When he got to the door, he knocked loudly, angrily. When the farmer stuck his head out the window he hollered, "Who's there? What do you want?" The fellow stopped pounding on the door and yelled up, "You know what you can do with your old jack. Just keep it! See if I care!"

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Blonde to the bone

A blonde had just gotten a new sports car and was out for a drive when she accidentally cut off a truck driver.

He motioned for her to pull over.

When she did, he got out of his truck and pulled a piece of chalk from his pocket, drew a circle on the side of the road, and gruffly commanded to the blonde, "Stand in that circle and DON'T MOVE!"

He then went to her car and cut up her leather seats.

When he turned around she had a slight grin on her face, so he said, "Oh you think that's funny? Watch this!"

He gets a baseball bat out of his truck and broke every window in her car.

When he turned and looked at her, she had a smile on her face. He really got mad. He got his knife back out and sliced all of her tires.

Now she's laughing. The truck driver is really starting to lose it.

He went back to his truck and got a can of gas, poured it on her car, and set it on fire.

When he turned around, he saw that she was laughing so hard she was about to fall down.

"What's so funny?" the truck driver asked the blonde.

She replied, "Every time you weren't looking, I stepped outside the circle."

Sometimes I wonder whether the world is being run by smart people who are putting us on or by imbeciles who really mean it. – Mark Twain

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In the Sermon on The Mount, Jesus said, *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, Matthew 6:34.* Among other things learned, there is this clear warning about the practice of *Borrowing Trouble*.

My attitude was just like the guy who needed the jack. I had better wait until the FEMA guy tried to take away the food, and then shoot him. And unlike that SA XD .45, my pistol magazines only held 7 rounds. And, yes Virginia, some Methodists have read the Bible, I have 3 or 4 versions of it. Except for the choice of language, most tell the same story. However, my Catholic Bible has several extra Books in the Old Testament. The Christian Old Testament includes the books of the Hebrew Bible as well as other deuterocanonical books, often referred to as the Apocrypha. These books are part of the Greek Septuagint but not in the main collections of Hebrew texts that became the Hebrew Bible. Protestants in general do not recognize these books as part of the Bible, though they may print them along with the books they do recognize (often placing them in a separately marked section between the Old and New testaments). However, this practice is fairly recent; most Protestant Bibles included the Apocrypha until around the 1820s.

The following list contains some of the more interesting facts of the Bible:

- The longest verse in the Bible is Esther chapter 8, verse 9.
- The longest chapter is Psalm 119, the shortest, Psalm 117.
- Middle verse – Many people believe Psalms 118:8 to be the middle verse of the Bible. This is perpetuated in large part by an e-mail chain letter of Bible facts, which tries to illustrate the recurrence of the number 1188 in the Bible. It is perhaps fitting that the verse in question talks about trusting God over man. Analysis done on a modern computer has yielded a different result. Using Microsoft Word 2000, (which resulted in a total verse count of 31,102 for the King James Version), the middle verses are Psalm 103, verses 1 and 2. (There is no middle verse, since there is an even numbered total verse count). There are 15,550 verses before and after these verses. Some verse counts in the past (probably counted by hand), have resulted in an incorrect verse count of 31,175, leading to Psalm 118:8 as the middle verse.
- The middle chapter is Psalm 117. There are 594 chapters before this one, and 594 after.
- The shortest book is the Third Epistle of John. The Second Epistle of John has one fewer verse, but contains more words.
- There are 773,692 words in the King James Version of the Bible.
- The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35.
- The longest word is "Mahershalalhashbaz" found in Isaiah chapter 8, verses 1 and 3.
- There are two similar chapters in the Bible. They are 2 Kings Chapter 19, and Isaiah chapter 37. (The first 14 verses of each chapter are the same, word-for-word, in the King James Version).
- A modern analysis using Microsoft Word 2000 yields a count 31,102 verses for the King James Version.
- There are 5,845 verses in the Torah (Five Books of Moses) corresponding to the Hebrew mnemonic "ha chama" or "the sun."
- The Bible contains 1,189 chapters (Old Testament-929, New Testament-260).
- There are no verses in the King James Version that contain all the letters of the alphabet, but Ezekiel 7:21 has all letters except "J" and Daniel 4:37 has all letters except "Q".
- There are only two books in the Bible that do not contain the word "God". They are Esther and Song of Solomon. (Elohim [God] as opposed to Yahweh [Lord])
- The word "eternity" occurs only once in the King James Version, in Isaiah 57, verse 15.

o

"We're here, where are you?"

"Sorry, lost in thought, thinking of all things, the Bible."

"I noticed that you quit fumbling with your rifle."

"I got to thinking about the jack joke and that got me to Matthew and from there I got to thinking about the Bible. It occurred to me that I would be borrowing trouble to make any assumptions about the FEMA guy."

"If things don't work out, you can always shoot him Randy," Paul smiled.

We pulled up to the first store and started unloading. Our arrangement was for gold or silver on the barrelhead, so to speak. We didn't want cash; we'd gotten rid of it by paying our state income taxes. It didn't appear that it would even make good toilet paper. June said to see if the store had more toilet paper, but they didn't. The best bet was Wal-Mart in Garden City. June had given me a list of things I should look for. I handed the guy the list and he just shook his head. We didn't see anything of the FEMA guy.

At the second store we unloaded their share and packed up ready to head to Garden City, I looked and the shelves looked pretty bare – no guy from FEMA. When we got to the County line, a Deputy had a roadblock set up.

"Hey you three, headed to Garden City?"

"Yeah, why the roadblock?"

"You haven't heard?"

"Heard what?"

"We have National Guard finally; it's just not Kansas National Guard. The Sheriff closed Kearny County and said he intended to call up all the Reserve Deputies."

"We hadn't heard, but on the way back, we'll stop and spend a while. Have you seen anything of that FEMA man?"

"He's in Garden City with that Guard unit. Enter Garden City at your own risk, fellas."

To be totally honest about it, I was back to fumbling with my rifle, checking my magazines and wishing I had a hone to put a little extra edge on the Ka-Bar. We made one stop in Garden City and unloaded our entire cargo. The trip to Wally World would have to wait.

"I need to talk to you guys."

We looked up and there stood a guy dressed in Blackhawk tactical clothing. He had FEMA lettered on the vest. He was wearing a handgun in an old military flap holster, circa WW II.

"We were just leaving, mister."

"Did you make a delivery?"

"Yep, got paid in gold and silver. We emptied out the truck."

"Where are you from?"

"Out west a ways, almost to Colorado."

"What did you deliver?"

"Not that's it's any of your business, fresh produce."

"I see you're carrying, I'll have to confiscate those weapons."

"In a pigs eye you will, Kearny County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's."

Oops, we just told him how far west. We showed him the badges and he let us go. Clever the way he found out where we were from, I wonder if his name was Charlie Chan? Nah, this guy had red hair, have you ever seen a red haired Chinese? What the hell, since FEMA knew we were here, we might as well stop by Wally World. I got the toilet paper and sanitary products, but not much else on June's list. It wasn't critical; we could grow our own herbs.

o

"Have any trouble?" the Deputy asked.

"Ran into that FEMA guy. Nosey SOB. I slipped up and told him we were from Kearny County. We can stay for a while to back you up if you'd like."

"Thanks, but I have backup on the way."

"We'll hang out until they show up."

"Ok. When you get back to Lakin, stop and see the Sheriff, he wants to talk to you."

When the 3 Reserve Deputies showed up, we headed to Lakin.

"Hi fellas, the Sheriff is in his office."

"Let's cut to the chase, what did you see in Garden City?"

"The FEMA man, a few military vehicles but nothing particularly out of the ordinary."

"That fed give you any trouble?"

"He tried to confiscate our weapons, but we flashed our badges."

"I was afraid of that."

"What? That he'd try and take our weapons or that we'd flash our badges?"

"Yep. A Sheriff can deputize anyone in an emergency, but under Kansas law, you have to have training to be a Reserve Deputy. Considering the state of emergency, I sort of ignored the letter of the law. Reserves are selected by background checks and interviews coupled with drug screening and psychological testing. They must attend approximately 22 weeks of training and must complete Road Level One Classes prior to driving a County vehicle."

"We don't use County vehicles, Sheriff."

"I know, but neither did you get the required training."

"We've never fired our weapons while serving as Deputies. In fact, the only time we did was on the raid up in Leoti to rescue the town's people and that was strictly a private adventure," Paul pointed out.

"I know, I know," the Sheriff said. "I'm caught between a rock and a hard spot."

"Do you have the certificates of training for one of your regular Reserve Deputies?"

"In their files, why?"

"If you had certificates like that on us, would you be covered?"

"I suppose, why?"

"I'm pretty handy on a computer, Sheriff."

"I didn't hear that. I'll get you one out of the files, but you be sure and bring it back."

It took me a couple of nights, starting with a high resolution scan and manipulating the pixels until I had genuine looking certificates for the 4 of us; you didn't forget Ray, did you? What the hell, I ran one off for Jason. With a high resolution scanner, an inkjet and the proper paper, you can duplicate nearly anything; just don't try it with money, jails are houses with bars on the windows. If the North Koreans could produce the so called *Super notes* using a press like the US government did and the government could still tell they were fake; what chance do you have with your inkjet? These were certificates, not money, and you couldn't tell them from the genuine article.

o

"Jason graduated too? Send him and I'll deputize him into the reserves."

"I'm sorry that we forgot to drop off our certificates earlier, Sheriff, but it's been pretty tough since the flu and the war."

"Not a problem, top of your class, huh?"

"Only because June and I had already been studying the EMT-2, just lucky, I guess."

"You might want to take this home with you and read up a little, it's the course book for the class you were top of."

And study, we did. We didn't want to get caught in our lie. It wasn't the same, of course, as going to a law enforcement academy, but we all studied. When we weren't milking cows, mucking out stalls, feeding the hogs or the chickens, that is. When we ran out of canning jars, I knew we would, we started blanching the veggies and freezing them. Thirty acres of garden required more jars than there were in all of southwest Kansas. Our first real day of rest was on the 3rd anniversary of the attack. We had fried chicken, potato salad, macaroni salad, homemade rolls, lettuce salad and a little taste of our homemade bourbon. That needed a couple of more years in the barrel, it wasn't quite ready.

"It's getting there, but it ain't ready," Mike suggested.

"Not too shabby for a first effort," Paul agreed.

"I think it tastes like the booze John Wayne was referring to in True Grit, genuine, double-rectified bust head."

"How long do you think it will take?"

"Maybe 6 years."

"You making more this winter?"

"I think so, yes, maybe a dozen barrels."

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 24

"What do you make of this situation with the National Guard and FEMA?"

"Right on schedule, 3 years after the disasters."

"It might not hurt to take on extra hired hands, can we arm them?"

"We don't exactly have a surplus of weapons, Paul."

"You're forgetting the M16s we liberated in Leoti."

"How many of those do we have?"

"Three dozen, we left the remainder with the people up there, remember?"

"Not really, no. You know I think it's about time I gave some thought to putting in a trailer for one of the kids. I'm not sure where I'll find a new one and I don't really want to dismantle and reassemble a used one."

"There are 3 dealers in Garden City."

"I'll get the contractor started on a new basement," I replied. "I sure hate going to Garden City."

"How's it working out having Don in that new triple wide?"

"Ok, I guess. Sandy sure seems to spend a lot of time over there."

"They are engaged."

"I know, but still..."

o

I found a home at Premier Homes in Garden City, an Osborne with optional basement entry, 2,280ft² called the Roseland Park. It had 4 bedrooms and a large family room. The dealer would assemble it on-site and I pointed out that it was sitting on a basement. He said it wouldn't make much sense to have a basement entrance without a basement. He wanted to talk to the contractor putting in the basement to make certain it was up to specs, whatever that means. Oh, probably I-beams to support the house, or perhaps the size of the basement.

Was I getting ahead of myself? Who would want the Jones house and who would want the trailer? For sure I'd have to put someone in the houses to keep them up until the kids graduated from high school in, what 2 years or 3? Does it matter, not everything

you need to know can be learned in school? Still, an education was the one thing no one could ever take away from you. Nevertheless, farming is almost entirely taught through On-the-Job training. If it came to the kids wanting to quit school, I'd discuss that with June. For sure, they weren't going to college in a post WW III world.

"You do know that Mary is getting pretty serious with that boyfriend of hers, don't you?"

"When did that happen June?"

"Land sakes, you must have your head where the sun doesn't shine. He was one of those students that worked in the garden. Jim's girlfriend was one of the girls too."

"I didn't know. The new house is set up and the dealer put in the propane tank. Once we put a load of wood in the basement, it will be ready to occupy."

"Just a wood furnace? Why didn't you put in a stoker and get a load of coal?"

"I did, but I couldn't get that much coal. I had to settle for bituminous; he said he couldn't get any anthracite."

o

As geological processes apply pressure to peat over time, it is transformed successively into:

- Lignite - also referred to as brown coal, is the lowest rank of coal and used almost exclusively as fuel for steam-electric power generation.
- Sub-bituminous coal - whose properties range from those of lignite to those of bituminous coal and are used primarily as fuel for steam-electric power generation.
- Bituminous coal - a dense coal, usually black, sometimes dark brown, often with well-defined bands of bright and dull material, used primarily as fuel in steam-electric power generation, with substantial quantities also used for heat and power applications in manufacturing and to make coke.
- Anthracite - the highest rank, used primarily for residential and commercial space heating.

o

"How much did you get?"

"Enough for the winter, provided the temps don't fall very low."

"Where did you find a wood furnace?"

"I didn't, the contractor did. He had it installed, the fire bricks replaced as needed and new grates installed. They had to reroute the ducting for the convection heating system

to incorporate the basement furnace. The propane furnace is still there, primarily for the air conditioning, but if they run out of coal and wood, they can run it."

"What did Paul do for electricity?"

"He moved one of his wind turbines and installed a backup generator."

"We only have one spare wind turbine and you sure can't go to Denver to get more."

"June, I know dear, but I don't really have a solution. We'll just have to run the house off the line and try and find wind turbines for Jason, Jim and Mary."

"It's a shame Paul and you didn't buy more."

"Hindsight is 20/20, June."

"Did they ever complete the Sunflower Wind Farm?"

"The one east of Leoti? I'm not sure, but I think it was interrupted by the flu and the war. Those were huge turbines, if we could install one of those; we could supply energy for the entire township."

"Well, what are you waiting for, go check them out."

o

"Jacob, how have things been since we drove those fellas out of Leoti?"

"We buried them, what do you mean by drove them out?"

"Figure of speech, I guess. Mike, Paul and I came up to see what you might know about that Sunflower Wind Farm."

"It was never completed, Randy. One of the towers had the base in but the tower wasn't up when the crap hit the fan."

"Who owns that facility?"

"Some corporation back east, why?"

"We have a bit of a problem. We have more homes on our three farms than we have wind turbines or solar panels."

"Do you want to drive over there and look?"

"Sure, do you have the time?"

"I'll make the time; Lord knows we owe you big time."

When fully developed, the wind farm would be comprised of between 50 to 75 wind turbines mounted atop tubular steel towers more than 200 feet in height and laid out in rows on a 6,000-acre project site. Sunflower would purchase the first 30 megawatts of the wind-generated energy produced by the project that has been designed to produce up to 100 megawatts as additional customers join the project. The turbines ranged in size from 500kw to 2mw. One of the 500kw units would be just perfect, but those probably went in first and the 2mw units were the ones being installed when the world ended.

"The base is over there, but I think the parts of the tower are stored in that warehouse."

"Crap, it's a big one, 2 megawatts."

"You could install a base and assemble the turbine. You ought to be able to sell power to the electric company."

"It sure would solve our problem with power on the farms, but who would we get to assemble it? Those towers look to be 200' high."

"Some of the fellas who worked construction on the project are from Leoti," Big Jake replied.

"Talk about falling in a bucket of crap and coming out smelling like a rose," Mike observed.

"Is everything there? It must need a control panel and transformers."

"It looks like it," Paul said scanning a manifest.

"Do you fellas have any idea what the wind level is in Kearny County?"

"Maybe 12mph, on average."

We were wrong, but didn't know it. Back in 1996-1998, a wind study had been done in Lakin and showed that the average wind speed at 25m was 6.75mps and at 40m was 7.29mps. 6.75 meters per second was 15.1mph and 7.29mps was 16.3mph. We had plenty of wind north of the Arkansas River. Jake said they would find time to haul the disassembled tower and all of the components down to Mike's farm in an effort to repay all that we had done for them. What had we done; just killed a few people badly in need of killing, nothing more.

o

NREL's advanced wind turbine program assumes that hub heights increase from 90 feet (27 meters), considered the base case, to 180 feet (55 meters) with only a 10% cost penalty. The tall tower is justified if there's a high wind shear, such as NREL believes exists on the American Great Plains. With wind shear approximating the $\frac{1}{7}$ power law, doubling tower height will increase the power available in the wind 45%. NREL's research, says Sue Hock, has found wind shear greater than the $\frac{1}{7}$ power law.

NREL's Hock says that turbines and towers need to be tailored to individual sites, and tower height is part of the equation in North America as well. Bob Lynette agrees. The choice of towers, he says, is site dependent. Lynette is testing a prototype of his Advanced Wind Turbine on a 140-foot (43-meter) guyed tubular tower on Tehachapi's Cameron Ridge. Lynette's AWT-26, a redesign of the ESI-80 undertaken as part of NREL's advanced wind turbine program (from which its name was derived), lends itself to tall towers, says Lynette. Guyed pole towers are an economical means for reaching the heights NREL envisions.

Lattice towers require torquing 400-500 bolts, a small crane, and a lay-down yard or staging area for assembly. Complex terrain can complicate if not thwart use of lattice towers because of the need to transport lattice tower sections from the assembly yard to the final site. The transport of huge assembled lattice tower sections is a hair-raising experience and risky task.

The greater footprint of guyed tubular towers relative to conventional tubular and lattice towers may make them less desirable to farmers and ranchers who will have to dodge them with their tractors. The problem is not unlike that faced a decade ago by Carter with his slender guyed tower. Landowners may demand higher royalties to compensate for their trouble. It's conceivable that higher land leases for guyed tubular towers could offset their lower initial costs, boosting long-term operating costs.

o

"Did you see the size of that thing?"

"Big, but it's a lattice tower so we can farm around it and build the equipment building in between the legs of the tower."

"I don't know if I want a flashing red light on my farm, fellas," Mike grouched.

"What the hell, our place is broken up into lots of small areas, I'll take the tower," I offered.

While the tower was 200' tall when assembled, the blades extended well above that. An old FAA regulation limited the height to 200'. I didn't vote for that guy in office anyway, so they could kiss my rosy red rump. We'd have to hook up with the power company once we got the turbine installed and see if they wanted us to connect to the power grid. Why waste all of the spare electricity we'd be generating? It would take all of the batter-

ies in Kansas and Colorado to store the extra energy and once they were charged, then what? 2mw divided by 110 volts was ~18,000 amps, or 4,500+ amps of 440v electricity.

Wasn't it nice of those people up in Leoti just to give us a 2mw wind turbine? We didn't steal it, they offered it, or Big Jake did. I'm probably wrong, but I deluded myself into believing that we were a holder in due course and the new turbine was our property. It doesn't work that way, you can never be a holder in due course of stolen property, but the owners were in New York City. I didn't expect them to object.

◦

Pace Picante Sauce isn't made in New York City and neither is the other brand. The headquarters for General Foods Corp. is in Rye, New York. The former General Foods Corp. headquarters complex was in White Plains, NY; been there, saw it, and never was in the building. Stayed in a motel in Greenwich, CT and it snowed about 15' in the area where we had our car parked. The motel ran out of food and we had to wade through snow to a deli just to get something to eat. Yep, its lots of fun being an auditor, you get to see the Country and develop a taste for Dutch Master cigars. That trip was made before 1979, and that's all I can tell you.

◦

Bush also hinted that US forces could remain in Iraq after his presidency ends in January 2009 – in answering a reporter's question about when all American troops would leave. Although they weren't, I addressed that earlier. Long before Bush made it official.

◦

"What are you doing?"

"Shining my crystal ball honey, it's working rather well right now."

"Did you find a few turbines?"

"We found one available turbine, unassembled and ready to go. Jake and some folks from Leoti are bringing it down."

"One turbine won't be enough. Why didn't you bring it back with you?"

"It's a 2 megawatt turbine and stands about 200' tall when it's assembled. It has a red light on top because it's so tall. They're going to have one hell of a time moving those sections of the lattice tower down here. Then, when it's installed, we have to build a building in between the tower legs to hold the equipment."

"Couldn't you find something a little bit bigger?" she asked.

"Was that sarcasm I detected, June?"

"You might say that."

"That. What are we going to do if the kids want to quit school?"

"Where did you get the idea that they might?"

"You said the Mary was pretty serious with that boyfriend of hers and that Jim had a girlfriend."

"And how long did we date before we got married?"

"Well, it started in the Army and continued after we got out until we got married."

"Dating isn't the same as having sex."

"It has been since the turn of the Century."

"In this case it's not. But, do you realize what your concern demonstrates?"

"What?"

She didn't answer but after a while, I figured it out. I was very fond of Jim and Mary and hoped that she'd let me walk her down the aisle when she did get married. They were good kids and needed a chance to grieve. It was a coin toss whether their dad would make it home and he came home in a box. The improved death benefits didn't last long, military families; even National Guard families have a tough go of it. Instead of a \$10,000 rifle, they ought to give the troops a \$10,000 pay raise.

We hadn't pressed either Mary or Jim, and given time, they adjusted to life on the farm. Getting Shep hadn't hurt and most of the gifts they received were practical. The CD players may have been the biggest departure, finding CDs had proven to be difficult. We found them laptop computers in Garden City that used Windows Vista, Service Pack 3. They were yea so big when they came and now Jim was taller than I was. That didn't take much; I was only 5'9. If Mary's boyfriend was taller than she, I just hoped he knew how to farm.

I should mention that wind turbine, too. The contractor put in several loads of concrete and the tower was assembled on the ground. Then, they brought in the biggest crane I've ever seen and stood the sucker up. Once it was securely anchored, some of the people installed the turbine and others built a control building and installed the equipment. Our newest residents were a semi-retired couple from Leoti who knew how to run the turbine and all of the equipment.

After the kids started back to school, the 6 of us, Jason, Ray, Don, Mike, Paul and I de-

cided to lay in a little extra supply of wood. We hoped to get it before the snow got heavy. We cut firewood until we had 70 cords, and each took 10 to stack beside the house under a tarp. Ralph and Johnny Barrows, the couple from Leoti had their own nice 16'x90' singlewide and they didn't burn much wood. But they had a fireplace, so we gave them 10 cords anyway.

We had far fewer soybeans to process, we got about 48 bushels per acre on a total of 600 acres. The only reason I fired up the still was to make 12 barrels of bourbon. I'm down to one tractor now, the Ford bit the dust, either transmission or rear end, maybe both. I'm holding off on the Clydesdales, I want to breed them again, along with the Morgan's. After that last farrowing, I had 30 sows mostly young ones. The average commercial dairy has about 45 milk producing cows. I hear that they try to optimize the breeding program and drop a calf about every 13 months. Amongst the 3 farms, we had 90 cows and produced plenty of milk.

I sure wished my old Ford tractor had held out another 4-5 years, I didn't have the time to shop around for whatever parts it would take to fix it. Four years of steadily breeding the Clydesdale mares would increase the herd to 20 and then I could begin to breed the first year's fillies. I was also going to need some sort of horse barn and it looked like, come spring, I better get on it. I think I should increase the permanent pasture too. It seemed like for every dollar we made, we had to spend two.

o

We really didn't believe that our 30 acres of gardens could feed the entire town and most certainly, we weren't producing enough beef; pork, maybe and chickens, no way. There weren't many aircraft flying these days and I left the red light on top of the wind turbine off, no sense advertising. Unfortunately, you could see the wind turbine from Lakin (I can see some of the Tehachapi wind turbines from Palmdale, 40 miles away). The Sheriff said I'd better turn that red light on. Now, how did he know I had a red light atop the turbine?

With 6 of us cutting wood, it didn't take long to add to our reserves. That done, Paul set to crushing 29,000 bushels of soybeans to extract the oil. We must have the best fed livestock in Kearny County. I brewed up some alky-hall and after I had a dozen charred barrels filled with 100 proof bourbon, added the benzene and made the anhydrous. We didn't need a lot, recycling it as we were. The electrical company declined to buy our excess electricity, darn it. We hooked into the high lines anyway but didn't flip the switch. One of these days, they'd have a boiler or generator go down and they'd come begging.

My fellow Americans,

While I regret the delay in informing the American public of our progress, until the satellites were replaced, we lacked the capacity to make a nation-wide address.

On July 4, 2009, the People Republic of China launched an estimated 200 weapons against our Country. Approximately 60% of those weapons were targeted on metropolitan areas with the remainder targeted on military installations. The United States responded, emptying the missile tubes on 4 of our Ohio class ballistic missile submarines.

As you may or may not know, after the war, India and Pakistan entered into an exchange of weapons with no clear winner. In addition, the government of Israel elected to attack most of their Arab neighbors when Iran announced they had succeeded in developing a nuclear weapon. Other than a brief exchange with the PRC, Russia has been strangely silent, although there is every indication that they had 3 bad winters in a row.

The 5mT weapon that the Chinese apparently aimed at Cheyenne Mountain detonated over Peterson AFB, decapitating Northcom. Northcom was responsible for the military response within the United States, handicapping our initial response.

Of the 120 weapons targeted on the largest 100 American cities, some cities received more than one strike and while optimal surface damage would be caused by air bursts, a few weapons detonated close to the ground, causing large amounts of fallout. In those areas, it may be years before we can affect a cleanup.

The change in the weather was surprisingly brief and by the third growing season, the effects of the war on the atmosphere were negating. However, the excessive ozone has continued the global heating and the icecap in Greenland is nearly gone, raising ocean levels and inundating coastal cities. Seismologists indicate that there is increased volcanic activity, especially in Alaska. A major quake, magnitude 8.4 hit California's central valley further reducing the ability of this nation to feed its remaining population.

Effective immediately, I am invoking certain Executive Orders to mitigate distribution problems within our food supply. Pursuant to EO 10999, your government will take over all food resources for redistribution pursuant to EO 10990. These orders will remain in effect until every man, woman and child has an adequate amount of food. The majority of petroleum products will continue to be used by the government pursuant to EO 10997 which has been in effect since the war. The National Guard, acting under FEMA's orders will implement these orders.

If all Americans work together to restore this great Country we anticipate that we can rescind the Executive Orders within a year or two. Our hearts go out to the millions of families who lost loved ones during the pandemic and the subsequent war.

Thank you and good night.

"What, no 'God Bless America'?"

"Bush said that, he was a Christian."

"The Bush's didn't play by the rules."

"What's that mean?"

"Democrats start wars and Republicans end them."

"That was an old Barry Goldwater line. Remember him, he ran for President after Kennedy was killed. Goldwater boldly declared in his acceptance speech at the 1964 Republican Convention that '...Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.' Goldwater's own rhetoric on nuclear war was viewed by many as quite uncompromising, a view buttressed by off-hand comments such as, 'Let's lob one into the men's room at the Kremlin.' Goldwater did his best to counter the Johnson attacks, criticizing the Johnson administration for its perceived ethical lapses, and stating in a commercial that '...we, as a nation, are not far from the kind of moral decay that has brought on the fall of other nations and people...I say it is time to put conscience back in government. And by good example, put it back in all walks of American life.' He carried 5 southern states and Arizona, just barely."

"Barry Goldwater was before my time. I remember Reagan though."

"As I recall, Goldwater was a Reagan supporter, but opposed the Christian Right being involved in Conservative politics. He was a Christian Jew, you know. Although he supported Civil Rights, he didn't back the 1964 Civil Rights Act, probably because he hated Johnson so much. He hung around for 3 more terms and then retired. Word is that he got more moderate in his later years."

"I'll have to take your word for it, I didn't know him."

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 25

The following Executive Orders are associated with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that would suspend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These Executive Orders have been on record for nearly 30 years and could be enacted by the stroke of a Presidential pen:

EXECUTIVE ORDER 10990 allows the government to take over all modes of transportation and control of highways and seaports.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 10995 allows the government to seize and control the communication media.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 10997 allows the government to take over all electrical power, gas, petroleum, fuels and minerals.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 10998 allows the government to seize all means of transportation, including personal cars, trucks or vehicles of any kind and total control over all highways, seaports, and waterways.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 10999 allows the government to take over all food resources and farms.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11000 allows the government to mobilize civilians into work brigades under government supervision.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11001 allows the government to take over all health, education and welfare functions.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11002 designates the Postmaster General to operate a national registration of all persons.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11003 allows the government to take over all airports and aircraft, including commercial aircraft.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11004 allows the Housing and Finance Authority to relocate communities, build new housing with public funds, designate areas to be abandoned, and establish new locations for populations.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11005 allows the government to take over railroads, inland waterways and public storage facilities.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11049 assigns emergency preparedness function to federal departments and agencies, consolidating 21 operative Executive Orders issued over a fifteen-year period.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11051 specifies the responsibility of the Office of Emergency Planning and gives authorization to put all Executive Orders into effect in times of increased international tensions and economic or financial crisis.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11310 grants authority to the Department of Justice to enforce the plans set out in Executive Orders, to institute industrial support, to establish judicial and legislative liaison, to control all aliens, to operate penal and correctional institutions, and to advise and assist the President.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11921 allows the Federal Emergency Preparedness Agency to develop plans to establish control over the mechanisms of production and distribution, of energy sources, wages, salaries, credit and the flow of money in US financial institutions in any undefined national emergency. It also provides that when the President declares a state of emergency, Congress cannot review the action for six months. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has broad powers in every aspect of the nation. General Frank Salzedo, chief of FEMA's Civil Security Division stated in a 1983 conference that he saw FEMA's role as a "new frontier in the protection of individual and governmental leaders from assassination, and of civil and military installations from sabotage and/or attack, as well as prevention of dissident groups from gaining access to US opinion, or a global audience in times of crisis." FEMA's powers were consolidated by President Carter to incorporate the:

National Security Act of 1947 allows for the strategic relocation of industries, services, government and other essential economic activities, and to rationalize the requirements for manpower, resources and production facilities.

1950 Defense Production Act gives the President sweeping powers over all aspects of the economy.

Act of August 29, 1916 authorizes the Secretary of the Army, in time of war, to take possession of any transportation system for transporting troops, material, or any other purpose related to the emergency.

International Emergency Economic Powers Act enables the President to seize the property of a foreign Country or national. These powers were transferred to FEMA in a sweeping consolidation in 1979.

That's just a reminder of the power that a President has. Obama was out of his mind if he thought he was getting any of our food. We owned the land, or were paying for it; we planted, cultivated and harvested crops grown from seed we produced. Perhaps that explained the presence of the FEMA guy and National Guard troops in Garden City. Lincoln got away with suspending Habeas Corpus.

HOMELAND SECURITY ACT of 2002

SEC. 886. SENSE OF CONGRESS REAFFIRMING THE CONTINUED IMPORTANCE

AND APPLICABILITY OF THE POSSE COMITATUS ACT.

(a) FINDINGS. – Congress finds the following:

(1) Section 1385 of title 18, United States Code (commonly known as the "Posse Comitatus Act"), prohibits the use of the Armed Forces as a posse comitatus to execute the laws except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress.

(2) Enacted in 1878, the Posse Comitatus Act was expressly intended to prevent United States Marshals, on their own initiative, from calling on the Army for assistance in enforcing Federal law.

(3) The Posse Comitatus Act has served the Nation well in limiting the use of the Armed Forces to enforce the law.

(4) Nevertheless, by its express terms, the Posse Comitatus Act is not a complete barrier to the use of the Armed Forces for a range of domestic purposes, including law enforcement functions, when the use of the Armed Forces is authorized by Act of Congress or the President determines that the use of the Armed Forces is required to fulfill the President's obligations under the Constitution to respond promptly in time of war, insurrection, or other serious emergency.

The Democrats had the White House, Senate and House; how do you think that would work out? If Bush was slow in responding to Katrina, what would you call a President who issued some Executive Orders and is just getting around to issuing more 3 years after the fact? Watch your language!

o

"I'm not going to take it, not for one by God minute. I've sweated marbles over this ill-advised, premature operation. I can't work miracles with the material they've given me. I'm gonna lay it on the line with CinCPac." Statement made by Admiral Broderick in the movie *In Harm's Way*.

Use the search function to find what you're looking for. The site has scripts and transcripts. I can remember one author who didn't want to do research and is a little slow producing stories because of all of the research he's doing now. Yes, Virginia, the US really does have multiple super-secret bunkers aka bomb shelters for government officials. But unless you know where they are, you can't find them, they aren't visible on the internet. The only a few in the public eye: Mt. Weather, the Greenbrier and Cheyenne Mountain. You knew they were looking at reactivating the Greenbrier, didn't you? "The Greenbrier's historian, Dr. Robert Conte, has produced a captivating slide presentation that showcases the former top-secret government relocation facility (bunker) that was built under the West Virginia Wing during the Cold War era. The Bunker is temporarily closed for renovations."

◦

It was in chapter 16 that Paul first suggested that the government might seize our farm production to feed the people, however, it wasn't until chapter 24 that the announcement came. Paul was the first to react to the President's speech.

"I'm not going to take it, not for one by God minute. Not if it means I'll have to shoot or blow up the entire National Guard."

"You can't fight City Hall, Paul."

"I don't intend to fight City Hall, just the Federal Government!"

"You'd have better luck fighting the City," Mike chuckled.

"Are you going to turn over your production, Mike?"

"No way, but neither am I going to shoot any National Guardsmen."

"And, just how do you propose to keep you production without shootings the National Guardsmen?"

"Did you listen to the speech, Paul? Obama said, *The National Guard, acting under FEMA's orders will implement these orders.*"

"Then you intend to go after the FEMA guy?"

"Or guys. Did you ever see *Mississippi Burning?*" Mike asked.

"Was that the movie about those Civil rights workers?"

"Yeah and they never would have found the bodies of Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney if James Jordan hadn't admitted to the FBI that he knew where the bodies were buried."

"You can't handle it by yourself."

"Maybe, or maybe not. If you deal yourself in, understand that no one will ever live to testify."

"I'm in," Paul replied.

"Count me in," I said.

◦

In the criminal law, a conspiracy is an agreement between two or more natural persons to break the law at some time in the future, so a natural person identified with the mind of a legal entity cannot conspire with the company alone. There is no limit on the number participating in the conspiracy and, in most countries, no requirement that any steps have been taken to put the plan into effect (compare attempts which require proximity to the full offense). For the purposes of concurrence, the actus reus (guilty act) is a continuing one and parties may join *the plot* later and incur joint liability and conspiracy can be charged where the co-conspirators have been acquitted and or cannot be traced. Finally, repentance by one or more parties does not affect liability but may reduce their sentence. A conspiracy theory may or may not relate to an actual conspiracy, and, an actual conspiracy may never be discovered.

o

I had a question, but didn't know who to ask for an answer. President Bush scraped the ABM Treaty to build a Ballistic Missile Defense System. There were several components to the system including: THAAD (Lockheed), Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) System (Boeing), PAC-3 (Boeing), Standard Missile-3 (Raytheon), Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Ships (Ticonderoga and Arleigh Burke). There were more, but you should get the idea. Many of these systems had been deployed, some as early as 2004. My question is, *How did all of those Chinese Weapons get through our BMDS?*

All of those systems worked in testing; how and why did we get hit by ~200 weapons? Have you given that any thought? Lacking anyone to ask or an internet to look it up on, I reasoned it out. China had to have more weapons than were reported by anyone; China must have been able to MIRV several missiles; and, we didn't have enough interceptors. If anyone has a better explanation, I'm all ears.

Mike's plan was to cut the head off the body of feds and an attempt to eliminate control of the National Guard. While Mike had been Marine Infantry, he wasn't in the same class as Paul, a Force Recon sniper. Neither did Mike have suppressors. If you didn't know by now, Paul would have the duty if we sniped the guy. However, this situation depending on the guy simply disappearing, just killing him would waiver a big red flag screaming someone was out to get FEMA. We lacked a plan B because none of us had suppressors for the pistols.

Yes, I'd wanted an USP Tactical but hadn't been able to find one. Moreover, I was beginning to suspect that if one could be found, the feds had already seized it. Obama had to be anti-gun; I think that was part of the Democratic platform. My list of H&K dealers didn't indicate there was anyone close to Lakin who sold the H&K firearms. On the other hand, OK, TX and CO had lots of H&K dealers. Our farm production had been good to us, money wasn't a problem and I'd even replaced one of the CDs I'd cashed out earlier. The matching can was made by Knight's Armament. Harvest was past and I decided to go shopping. I had the bourbon and didn't really need to hurry in processing that soy-

bean oil

I started in Tulsa; it was close and hadn't been hit. He had them, but wanted a premium and said he didn't see how he could sell me the class III suppressors. When we laid our badges on the counter, he broke into a smile.

"Reserve Deputies huh? That solves one problem, but you're looking at some serious money here fellas."

"Would a Krugerrand get us what we want?"

"Well, I could let you have 3 pistols with suppressors and 5 magazines each for 4 ounces."

"Five grand? That's a might steep, do you have them in stock?"

"Sure do."

"Do you have any of the 200 grain +P Speer Gold Dot?"

"How many cases?"

"One apiece ought to do."

"Well, for the price, I'd be willing to let you have 500 rounds per pistol."

"Done."

"Let's see, which one of you is Smith and which one is Jones?"

"We usually go by Manny, Moe and Jack."

"And you related, right, all named Smith or Jones? Anything else you fellas need?"

"I don't suppose you have suppressors for M16s?"

"Any particular brand?"

"Surefire is the best, but they're pretty steep. Nah, whatever you have in stock."

"They'll run you \$900 for the M-4FA."

"How many do you have?"

"How many do you need?"

"A minimum of 3, but more would be nice."

"I have 10."

"Done deal, figure it up and we'll see if we brought enough gold."

"Eleven and one quarter ounces fellas."

"Make it an even pound and give us some extra ammo."

"I throw in 3 parts kits and by the way, my name is John Doe."

We got the weapons, but were out about 5 grand apiece. When one considers the alternative, they were in all probability a very good investment. When we got home, we sorted through the M16s and found 10 of the A4s equipped with the ACOG, the standard sight for US Marines on their M16A4s. We also added Crimson Trace laser grips to the pistols. Now all we need was a plan that would ensure our not getting caught. John Doe? He didn't have us fill out any paperwork either, but he had a gleam in his eye when we each laid out 4 one ounce gold coins.

o

We sent Ray to Garden City with a shopping list but mostly to check out the FEMA guy. There were 2 of them now and the new guy wasn't casually armed, wearing an H&K handgun and carrying MP5K-PDW. DHS ordered the H&K firearms in 2004. The K model MP-5 is the little one. The Glock 23 is the standard FBI issue firearm in .40S&W and their SWAT Teams use Springfield Armory .45ACPs. This was beginning to get serious; it would be difficult to get close to those guys. Ray claimed the second FEMA guy looked more like a bodyguard, always standing off to the side, scanning the scene. The guy Ray assumed we met was still wearing his old military style flap holster. Our gravy had a bit too much flour.

"Where are they staying?"

"They have rooms at the Best Western Wheat Lands Hotel and Conference Center."

"Figures, it's the most expensive place in Garden City; they're probably on the 2nd floor."

"I didn't ask."

Ray was a pretty smart young man and prolific, Sue was expecting, again. We could bury the bodies deep and no one would ever find them. That wasn't the problem, getting them dead was. If the government thought it necessary to provide the FEMA guy with a bodyguard, we concluded that it wasn't good news for us and if we took the 2 guys out, they'd just send more. We needed a break to make this happen. Say, why would he

need a bodyguard with the National Guard in Garden City? Was that a chink in his armor?

We decided to send Don to see if he could learn any more. He checked into the hotel and hung out like he was resting up from a trip. Being only 18, he wasn't a Reserve Deputy and nobody in Garden City knew him. Apparently the hotel had faith in the government, they were accepting FRNs. One of the larger employers in Garden City was Iowa Beef Processors, which had been acquired by Tyson Foods in 2001. He could always claim he was looking for a job at Tyson Meats.

FEMA was using a conference room at the hotel as its headquarters. Don overheard a couple of Guardsmen belly aching about the FEMA man, apparently FEMA had taken over Tyson Meats and intended to use it to process the beef they were going to seize. FEMA was riding rough shod over the National Guard and they had a belly full. They also said that they didn't like being forced to act like cops. Just a darn minute, cops? That answered another question; Obama had somehow managed to suspend Posse Comitatus, no doubt with the help of Congress. And all this time we had thought that Dubya had acted perhaps a bit, Imperial. We obviously had a lot to learn about what was going down. As stalwart Republicans, we had supported John McCain and he was looking better with the passage of time. McCain would have never given up Taiwan. What did that mean, would WW III just have happened sooner?

o

The National Guard when not federalized can act as cops at the direction of the Governor. Once federalized, they're active duty military coming under Posse Comitatus. But, we've got to stay on this immediate problem, how are we going to get 2 guys who rarely leave the hotel? We'd have to take the bodyguard out first but I saw the movie and Kevin Costner was very hard to sneak up on. Sometimes having dumb luck beats the heck out of whatever comes second. We got a call from the Sheriff; he was activating us because FEMA was coming to Lakin to discuss who in the County had what. We would be handling traffic on the east County line.

We're invoking the 5th Amendment here, but the general details of what happened were that the FEMA guys made it to Lakin and had their meeting. They were lucky the people from Kearny County didn't kill them on the spot. Round about dusk, they came rolling up to our roadblock. Finney County Deputies later found their Suburban in a ditch about 2 miles inside the Finney County line, but the FEMA guys were missing. The vehicle wasn't seriously damaged and the Deputies said that it appeared to them that they'd gone off the road and had gotten out and walked toward Garden City.

That MP5K-PDW is a cute little gun, I wish I had one too, but Mike said, "Finders, keepers." Personally I think it was dumb for Mike to keep it, it should have gone in the hole with the bodies and their other guns. You did watch CSI, didn't you? It just takes one little clue and they gotcha. Anyway, we told the Deputies who checked with us that they cleared our roadblock just about dusk, could they have gotten lost in the dark after their

vehicle ran off the road? They didn't seem to think it was likely, if they came through at dusk, there should have been enough light so they shouldn't have gotten lost.

A few days later, two FBI Special Agents showed up and asked questions. We made sure our stories weren't exactly all the same. Must have shook Mike, though, he buried those guns, deep. It would have been nice if that was the end of it, but it was just the beginning. Whoever invented duct tape should get a medal.

◦

We didn't get much snow that winter, maybe 10". However, it was probably the longest winter of our lives. The government allows an individual to distill 200 gallons of ally-hall a year, legally. 12 barrels at 53 gallons each was 636 gallons. Plus, we had unregistered cans for our M1As, the USP Tactical's and 10 of the M16A4s. Yes, 3-round burst M16A4s, illegal too because they were unregistered. Odd numbers are full auto and even numbers are 3-round burst. The M-4 is the same, plain its 3 round burst and A1 is full auto. You can remove the handle from the A3 and A4 and install the Aimpoint sights. I think I told you the Army split the OICW into 2 programs, but did I tell you they suspended the XM-8 program? They were probably looking at H&K's HK416. Don't know; the decision was to wait until after Iraq and they were very busy after that. [The USMC adopted them to replace the M-249.]

That XM-8 didn't look like a military weapon, unless your name was Buck Rogers. By contrast the HK416 did look like a military weapon. Apparently they went inter-service on the subject of a new combat rifle and open the process up to bidding. One of the problems they never solved with the XM-8 was the weight; it gained weight to 7.5 pounds instead of losing it down to 5.7 pounds. H&K completely redesigned the magazine for the HK416, eliminating the dust problem that plagued the M16s and M4s in Iraq. The rifle had the same 4 barrel lengths that were supposed to be available for the XM-8.

◦

"How's the biodiesel production coming?" Paul asked.

"I don't believe I'm going to have much to sell, but I did sell that place in Garden City 15,000 bushels of corn. I made 12 barrels of bourbon and 500 gallons of anhydrous ethanol. I've got Jim feeding corn, soybean meal and dried mash into the hammer mill to produce feed for the livestock. Is Mike still nervous over our pulling traffic duty for the Sheriff?"

"Not since the ground settled and he finished plowing, no."

"Did the FBI come by and ask you a bunch of questions?"

"Oh, them. Yes, they came by and I just told them my version of what happened. Mike said that they initially acted like they thought we'd done something, but he mostly

shrugged them off and told them his version of manning the roadblock. He thought they seemed satisfied. They mentioned that FEMA would be sending in replacements."

"No problem, we have 1,900 acres to plant them in."

"We'll never pull off the same method twice."

"You can use your Super Match M1As next time, if there is a next time."

"Somehow I get the feeling that we haven't seen the last of them."

"Let's not cross that bridge until we get to it, Paul."

"Randy, what have we gotten ourselves into? I can't believe this President waiting until 3 years after THE CRAP HIT THE FAN and then pulling this stuff. If he had done it early on, I'd have understood, but we have everything set up with the grocery stores and the packing plant and the 3 of us are feeding hundreds if not thousands of people."

Each 1,000-head hog finishing barn produces enough pork to feed 8,800 people for one year, and an 80-cow dairy produces enough milk in one day to provide 3,000 people three 8-ounce glasses of milk. As of 1995, the average farmer produced enough food to feed 129 people on the average 300 acre farm. Among us, we were producing around 900 surviving pigs a year and had a total of 90 dairy cows fresh. We were keeping the heifers and selling or butchering the steers. We might not be the ultimate producers, but left alone, we did a pretty good job of supplying Lakin, Kansas. If we could get more help, we could always grow bigger gardens, but there was a definite limit to how much food we could can because we didn't have enough jars. The grocery stores said they could take more fresh produce ala green beans and guaranteed to purchase all of our excess production. Many of the people in town would be looking for things to can themselves in the coming year.

"Do you think we could increase the size of our garden?"

"I can if you can find me help to work it," June answered. "But won't FEMA just seize it if we grow a bigger garden?"

"Paul told me that Mike told him that the FBI said that FEMA was sending in replacements for those 2 guys who disappeared. I suppose it's possible they might try, honey. I'm not sure how we can stop them."

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 26

"You could shoot them."

"That might start another war. You said that you wanted peace."

"I meant that I didn't want this Country to get involved in another foreign war. It wouldn't be the first time this Country has had a Civil War."

"June, a lot of people died in the Civil War. The war produced more than 970,000 casualties (3 percent of population), including approximately 560,000 deaths. Our population is maybe 200 million and 3% of that would be 6 million people. I'm not so sure the fatalities would be as proportionally high but a lot of people could die."

"It would make more sense than the first Civil War. This time it would be more of a Revolution than a Civil War. The founding fathers of this Country envisioned the day when it could happen."

"They also passed laws against insurrection and rebellion."

"I'll shoot any SOB who tries to steal our food."

"We already thought of that."

"Say, did you have anything to do with the disappearance of those FEMA guys?"

"Why would you think that?"

"The 4 of you were manning the roadblock the day they disappeared."

"Right, they came through there right about dusk. But as you well know, their vehicle was found in a ditch in Finney County, past our roadblock. I can't believe you would think that we had anything to do with their disappearance."

"But if you did, you'd tell me right?"

"Yes dear." (Only 4 people know exactly what happened that day and you aren't one of them.)

Would the first shot fired in the 2nd American Revolution be heard around the world (April 19, 1775) too? Not likely, the guys with the guns had silencers, or so I've heard. With satellite service restored, the internet was back up as was long distance. Not that we had anyone to call. Because the government put up those satellites, I wondered what they had built into them to monitor phones calls and the internet. The FBI's computer program hadn't worked, and it took them nearly 3 years to replace those satellites. Mueller told Congress that the agency is far from relying on carrier pigeons. Since Sept.

11, the agency has developed the ability to receive and disseminate intelligence electronically within the FBI and to the intelligence community and allows agent's access to standardized intelligence information reports online. (Fox News Saturday, March 26, 2005) It was the Virtual Case File program they scrapped. I was sure Big Brother (NSA) was listening. I was getting paranoid (conscience).

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Does anyone know what year it is? It seems to me that this must be around late 2012 or early 2013. That's what happens when you get busy on the farm, you lose track of time. Jim and Mary had come here back in 2010, just before their 14th birthdays. And they started 9th grade in the fall of 2010. That's right; they're in 11th grade this year. And Sandy is a senior who can't wait to graduate and get married. I have a lot on my mind these days. I must be getting older; my mind seems to be going, along with my hairline. All the hard work seems to keep my gut down. Wait, 11th grade? That means they'll be seniors in the fall of 2013, doesn't it?

"Have either Jim or Mary said anything about their plans when they graduate from high school?"

"You really think ahead, Randy, that won't be for 17 months."

"I'd sort of lost track of time, you know. I realized that they'll be seniors next year. Is Mary still going with the same boy?"

"Yes and Jim is still seeing the same girl."

"Did they say anything to you about their plans?"

"I think Mary might be planning on getting married, but I'm not so sure about Jim."

"Whichever one of them gets married first gets his or her choice between the house and the double wide."

"Not necessarily, I think they've talked about and already decided who is going to live where."

"Are we having fun yet?"

"Huh?"

"They say that time flies when you're having fun."

"Time flies when you get older too, Randy."

"My hair is getting thinner too."

"I noticed, but it doesn't look bad. If you're vain about it, don't wear a butch."

"I couldn't stand having long hair, June. Say, could you make an appointment with the dentist for me; I think I lost a filling."

"We should probably all have a checkup; I'll try and schedule it for a Saturday morning when the kids aren't in school. Do you need something for it, I have oil of cloves?"

"It doesn't hurt yet, but if it does, I'll let you know and we'll try it."

(Oil of cloves is sometimes used by dentists when they fill teeth. They swab out the hole before they fill it, causing the nerve to shrink away.)

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The next event I recall was the kids' 17th birthday party on April 16th. We hadn't seen hide or hair of those FEMA folks and we were hoping they wouldn't be back. Wish in one hand and spit in the other; see which one fills the fastest. Mary invited her boyfriend John and Jim invited his girlfriend Julia. Nice looking kids and polite too. I remembered seeing them in the garden the previous year, but I hadn't put them together with the kids. I made a point not to call Jim and Mary kids in front of their friends. In a couple of months, they be seniors and it seemed like only last week that they'd come to live with us. I was going to need a program to keep all of the players straight, E-I-E-I-O. With a moo-moo here and a...

"How big do you want the garden, June? I'm trying to decide what to plant where."

"Mary asked around and we'll have plenty of help. What would you say to 20 acres?"

"Do you want it 400' by 2,200' or 200' by 4,400'?"

"Make it wider and we won't have to walk quite as far."

"You're a glutton for punishment. Fine, I'll just cut back on the grass, at the moment we have more than we can use. If we get any more, I'm going to have to pile it around the barn like we did when the Chinese attacked."

"How's that bourbon coming?"

"Haven't tasted it since last Independence Day, I'd guess it's about half ways towards becoming good bourbon."

"Compared to what?"

"Oh, I don't know, Maker's Mark?"

"That's 90 proof."

"They have a gold wax version that's 101.5 proof. All of that was exported before the war."

"And now?"

"They have competition; I don't have any rye to add to my brew, only wheat and barley."

"How will you know when it's ready?"

"Just like they do, by the taste."

"Is yours made exactly the same way?"

"Nope, I use a hammer mill, not a roller mill."

"You know that close only counts..."

"...and when the store is out of bourbon."

o

What most of you never knew:

In a televised speech on October 22, 1962, American President John F. Kennedy publicly announced that the USSR had begun to deploy medium and intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Cuba, approximately 145 km (90 mi) from Florida. Moreover, the president said, by their doing so the Soviets had demonstrated that they had for many months been lying about their intentions in that island nation. Kennedy then stated that the United States was prepared to not only blockade Cuba but to ultimately do whatever might be necessary to remove the missiles. Finally, he warned, a Soviet attack on any target in the United States or Latin America would result in what he called "a full retaliatory response on the Soviet Union." In the days that followed Kennedy's address, Soviet ships moved toward a line of US naval vessels that had been set up as a blockade to "quarantine" Cuba. The US government's intention was to force the Soviets to ship their missiles back to the Soviet Union.

By October 27, the superpowers seemed near to war. As the Soviet missile sites reached completion, the American pilot of a U-2 spy plane was shot down over Cuba and the pilot killed. Also during that time, President Kennedy ordered 180,000 combat-ready troops deployed to the southeastern United States to prepare to attack Cuba. On October 28, however, just before 9:00 EST, Soviet chairman Nikita Khrushchev announced in a broadcast over Radio Moscow that he would accept Kennedy's pledge not to invade Cuba in return for a Soviet pledge to remove the missiles from the island. Cu-

ban leader Fidel Castro was outraged at what he felt was a Soviet betrayal, but he reluctantly allowed the missiles to be withdrawn. The stark reality of the Cuban Missile Crisis only became clear decades later, the result of a joint US-Russian-Cuban research project (the Cuban Missile Crisis Project), which sponsored six international conferences between 1987 and 2002 that included some of the major players from both sides who had taken part in the confrontation.

As a result of these conferences and continuing research, it is now clear that the key sources of the crisis were the enormous, mutual misperceptions and misunderstandings between Washington and Moscow and Havana. The Soviets, for example, felt that they had to deploy the missiles to Cuba because they believed (incorrectly, but understandably, following the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of April 1961) that a massive US assault on Cuba was imminent. On the other hand, the United States dismissed growing signs of the possibility of a Soviet deployment of nuclear missiles to Cuba because the Soviets had never before positioned such weapons outside the Soviet Union, and because it was so obvious (to the United States, though not to the Soviets) that such a move would be totally unacceptable in Washington. In addition, the Soviets felt sure (though the Cubans tried several times to persuade them that they were wrong) that the missiles could be introduced into Cuba secretly, via a clandestine operation supplemented by a systematic attempt to deceive the United States.

Thus the danger of the confrontation in 1962 was more severe than US leaders, from Kennedy on down, believed at the time. Recent revelations from the Cuban Missile Crisis Project have shown that any US attack on Cuba would have also been an attack on more than 40,000 Soviet citizens who were deployed chiefly around the missile sites, which would have been the primary targets. At the time, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimated that fewer than 10,000 Soviets had arrived on the island. Furthermore, by the last weekend of October 1962, Castro had concluded that a US air strike and invasion of Cuba was all but inevitable. This led him to request of Khrushchev, in a cable sent on October 27, that in the event of an invasion, the Soviet leader launch an all-out nuclear strike against the United States. If Cuba was to be destroyed, Castro urged the Soviets to take the United States down with it. Cuba would thus be a martyr for the socialist cause.

Also by October 27, when the majority of President Kennedy's military and civilian advisors were advocating an attack on Cuba, the Soviets had already delivered 162 nuclear warheads to that Country. The CIA believed at the time that there were no warheads on the island. During the last few days of the crisis, the Soviet field commander ordered the warheads for the short-range, tactical weapons moved out of storage and closer to their launchers. He did so without prior approval from Moscow, and he likely would have ordered their use in the event of a US invasion. A further fact uncovered is that each Soviet submarine escorting ships bound for Cuba carried one nuclear-tipped torpedo, which could be used without consultation with Moscow. One such submarine, certain that it was under attack from US vessels and that war may have already begun, came very close to launching its nuclear weapon against the US fleet blockading Cuba, an action that might well have led to a US nuclear response.

Thus the Cuban Missile Crisis Project came to the conclusion that by the last weekend of October 1962, all the pieces were in place for Armageddon to occur. Some 250,000 Cuban troops and more than 40,000 Soviet troops armed with dozens of tactical nuclear weapons would have met a US invasion force (which would not have been equipped with nuclear weapons), initiating nuclear war in the (mistaken) assumption that the United States would have attacked with nuclear weapons. Historians speculate that such an action would very likely have ended in nuclear catastrophe. In the end, President Kennedy rejected military advice for a full-scale surprise attack on Cuba and instead delivered the public ultimatum to the USSR on October 22, declaring the quarantine and demanding the withdrawal of all offensive missiles. After nearly a week of unprecedented tension, the Khrushchev government yielded. Kennedy, in return, agreed to refrain from attempting an overthrow of Castro's government. Despite this concession, all sides regarded the outcome as a substantial victory for the United States, and Kennedy won a reputation as a formidable international statesman. The USSR, for its part, began a long-term effort to strengthen its military capability, but in the immediate future both nations sought to relax hostilities.

(So darned close! I may have known before most of you did, there were 12 B-47's on the flight line, loaded and ready to go. We would have known when they took off. It was a long time before people learned that part of the deal was removal of the Jupiter C missile from Italy and Turkey. They were replaced by SLBMs carried by Washington class SSBNs.)

o

The situation with FEMA reminded me of a loaded gun with the hammer cocked and the safety off. No good was going to come of it. We didn't know that the 2 men had already been replaced by 3 men 1 representative and 2 body guards. They flew in during the middle of the night, holed up in the same hotel and were almost totally unobtrusive. When word finally leaked out, what we heard was they were trying to repair relations with the National Guard unit. It was suggested that they wait until the crops were in the ground before they gave us the bad news.

We had an abundance of hay, several years supply of biodiesel and if push came to shove, we'd just let the ground lie fallow for a year. Why not, it worked for Gandhi and Martin Luther King? We didn't need to plant gardens either, not for ourselves.

"You're going to do what, Randy?"

"I'm not planting a single crop, Paul"

"Garden?"

"Nope, nothing."

"What about your cattle, hogs and chickens?"

"If I have to, I'll sell them to Big Jake for a dollar and buy them back when the trouble is over."

"What are you going to tell them about the big wind turbine?" Mike wanted to know.

"That's only a 60kw unit."

"No way, you would really do those things?"

"It worked for Gandhi and Martin Luther King."

"Need I remind you that they're both dead?"

"Better a bullet than to live in tyranny."

"Do you want us to join your protest?"

"That's entirely up to you, fellas, Tyranny is usually thought of as cruel and oppressive, and it often is, but the original definition of the term was rule by persons who lack legitimacy, whether they be malign or benevolent. Historically, benign tyrannies have tended to be insecure, and to try to maintain their power by becoming increasingly oppressive. Therefore, rule that initially seems benign is inherently dangerous, and the only security is to maintain legitimacy – an unbroken accountability to the people through the framework of a written constitution that provides for election of key officials and the division of powers among branches and officials in a way that avoids concentration of powers in the hands of a few persons who might then abuse those powers. The key is always to detect tendencies toward tyranny and suppress them before they go too far or become too firmly established. The people must never acquiesce in any violation of the Constitution. Failure to take corrective action early will only mean that more severe measures will have to be taken later, perhaps with the loss of life and the disruption of the society in ways from which recovery may take centuries."

"Damn, count me in," Paul said.

"Hey, me too."

It beat the hell out of going around killing people. That was something you might get away with once, but if you kept it up, a pattern would emerge and that's how they caught serial killers. I'll bet June would be relieved and we could still plant a small one family garden. That would give Jim and Mary an excuse to have the friends come out to the farm and help. We decided that instead of dumping the milk, we'd make cheese, something that required aging, like cheddar. Our gardens would produce just enough food to feed our families and maybe enough to feed a couple of friends families.

I had a little socked away against a rainy day and I could still make payments to Rose and James Jones. I might plant a couple of acres of corn, wheat and barley to keep myself occupied during the next winter, just enough grain to produce 12 barrels of bourbon. I am not, by my nature, a drinking man, but an occasional nip on a cold winter's night helps to take the chill off. And we almost made a tradition of sampling the whiskey on the 4th of July. Those contracts with the grocery stores contained an out; we couldn't be held to selling food we didn't produce.

o

"They're baccck..."

It was a line from one of the Amityville Horror movies. Only in this case, the reference was to the FBI.

"We're doing a follow-up on the disappearance of those 2 men who worked for FEMA."

"What can I tell you?"

"You said they showed up right about dust?"

"Yeah, the big guy was driving and the wimp was in the passenger seat. We'd seen them before, when they were headed to Lakin."

"And you..."

"Just waived them through. You can't miss those Suburban's with the federal license plates."

"And you didn't hear any gun fire or anything a few minutes later?"

"No. Why, did you find some blood stains?"

"We haven't found anything; it's as if aliens abducted them."

"I don't know what else I can tell you. Mike, Ray, Paul and I had been called up by the Sheriff to put up a roadblock at the east Kearny County line. We were armed with M1A rifles and .45 autos. There wasn't a lot of traffic that day, just locals going about their business. We didn't see any UFOs."

"FEMA brought in replacements."

"We heard. Tell them not to bother; we've overworked the land and are planning on allowing it to lie fallow for a year. We're only going to grow enough food for our own consumption."

"But these three farms all have dairy herds."

"Hasn't been any cheese in the stores for a while; we're setting up a cheese operation. We'll probably feed the whey to the hogs."

"Thanks, we still have more interviews to conduct."

o

A person can't avoid answering questions. It's also a good time to plant a few seeds of disinformation. Not a lot, you don't want to tell them anything you don't want them to know. No matter how secure the FBI thinks its interviews are, these things have a way of getting around. Like maybe a local overhears them discussing something in a café. Possibly a secretary in an office hears something and mentions it to the spouse. The next thing you know, it is page one news on the Washington Post: "Farmer's Protest, Refuse to Plant Crops!"

"The word's around that you're not planting crops this year."

"Sheriff, we've worked the ground hard since the war. Production has fallen off and we need to incorporate more manure and allow it to lie fallow for a year. We're also planning on switching to a cheese producing operation. What's the big deal; it's just a short term fix to a long term problem?"

"I see. We're not really short of anything and I suppose the other farmers can pick up the slack."

"It might be different if we could get agricultural chemicals and anhydrous ammonia. The thing is we're using manure and crop rotation, Sheriff. My old Ford tractor gave up the ghost and I'm going to have to use our horses for part of the work. They're bred, so we can't use them this year. I had tractor parts, but nothing to fix the transmission and rear end."

"What's this I heard about a big wind turbine?"

"It was a gift from the people of Leoti for helping them clean up the town. We offered what extra energy we might have to the electric company, but they weren't interested. The FBI was back, doing second interviews."

"Oh, really?"

Liar, liar, pants on fire. Where did you hear we weren't planting crops, Sheriff? Be careful or your nose might grow. If your ears were any bigger, we'd have to call you Dumbo. Was Michael wearing a dress when they nuked Bahrain? Inquiring minds want to know!

"Just told them what I told them before. They wanted to know if we heard any shots, but

we hadn't, so what could I tell them I hadn't told them before."

"What kind of cheese?"

"Probably cheddar, maybe some Jack."

"I hear the kids are going to have their friends help in the garden."

"Where did you hear that, Sheriff? I didn't think anyone knew that."

"Small town, word gets around. Do you suppose I could get a quart of the shine?"

"All we make is anhydrous alcohol Sheriff, you can't drink it."

"Oh."

◦

I hadn't figured out how I was going to bottle the bourbon in 2-3 years when it was ready. I'd probably end up with 750ml plastic capped glass wine bottles, if I could find them. I also did some research on the internet and found out that I need a permit to produce ethanol for biodiesel and wasn't allowed to produce my own moonshine or bourbon. It was just plain illegal. So was making other products for your own consumption. So, when the Sheriff asked for a bottle of shine, I knew better. Besides, how was I going to apply for a permit?

In the story, *The Consultant*, the government got too oppressive and it took an armed rebellion to set things right. We had started down that path but, for my part, my conscience got the better of me. Sure Gandhi and King died, but only after they'd started a snowball rolling down a hill that couldn't be stopped. In our immediate case, it hadn't quite gotten to that, yet. Who could really argue with us giving the land a year to rest? As long as we made our payments, no one had any claim against us.

I hadn't count on what happened next. The Sheriff said, "Small town, word gets around." In the movie *Stripes*, one character said, "That's a fact, Jack." The next thing you knew, our phone was ringing off the hook, people volunteering to help in the gardens, if we'd just make them bigger and they could get a share. My problem was that I had already made exceptions for the kids' boy and girl friends. After several calls, Mike and Paul came over and said they'd tried to reach us but our phone line had been busy. They had taken similar calls and wanted to know what I had decided.

"I'm in a tough spot; I already told the kids that John and Julia could work in the garden so their families would have food. So when the calls started coming I couldn't really say no. First June and I talked about a bigger garden and then I decided that passive resistance was the best approach. Mike and you can do what you want, Paul, but it looks like I'm going ahead with a 20 acre garden after all."

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 27

"If you're going that route we should too."

"You will? Good, I'd bet we'll have plenty of help keeping FEMA off our backs."

"Our hogs and cattle are bred. I don't see how we can avoid selling the steers and the barrows."

"Oh I agree; I don't really see how we can keep from selling the steers and pigs once they reach market weight. It's still a good idea to give the land a rest, though."

"Are you planting anything besides a garden?"

"Oh I just thought I put in one small patch of wheat, barley and corn in case we need more anhydrous alcohol."

I though you just used corn."

"I'm using a recipe similar to what Marker's Mark uses, without the rye. You did know they use a small batch process, didn't you? They use corn, wheat and barley to make their bourbon."

"You really think this stuff you made will be up to their standards?"

"Probably not, but I think I can come close."

"What are we going to need to start making cheese?"

"The internet is back up and I got some information for the web. I thought I'd try to make Longhorn Colby and maybe some Monterey Jack. Colby is similar to cheddar, but because it is produced through a washed-curd process, it is a softer, moister, and milder cheese. The washed-curd process means that during the cooking time, the whey is replaced by water; this reduces the curd's acidity, resulting in Colby's characteristically mild, gentle flavor. Monterey Jack is a type of cheddar-style cheese using pasteurized cows' milk. It is commonly sold by itself, or mixed with Colby to make a marbled cheese known as Colby-Jack (or Co-Jack). If I can get my hand on some peppers, I might make some Pepper jack."

"One time I was in northern Iowa and got some pepper cheese, but the cheese wasn't jack, it was something else, Havarti."

"I've eaten of one made with Neufchatel, a traditional, soft-white, table cheese. I liked that really well, but I'm not sure how to make the cheese. What were you doing in northern Iowa?"

"Marilyn and I took the kids to the Wisconsin Dells. We went up through north eastern Iowa and saw some clocks, bought some cheese and moved on to Wisconsin."

"Large, handmade clocks?"

"That's right."

"That's Spillville. Most of the residents were Czech and Antonin Dvorák, his wife Anna and two of their children spent some time there during the summer of 1893, after he finished *From the New World, Symphony no. 9*. While he was there, he wrote *Quartet in F, opus 96*, the American, sometimes referred to as the Spillville Quartet. Shortly after the completion of *Opus 96*, he began work on a quintet for strings, the *String Quintet in E flat*. In the quintet's second movement is the first definite suggestion of Native American musical influence. The clocks were made by the Bily brothers."

"You've been there?"

"Yes, on our way to the Wisconsin Dells. It seems like people stopped visiting the natural wonders after they began building amusement parks."

o

June and I took some time and went through our medical supplies, discarding outdated meds and making a list of things we'd need to replace. The questionable items we boxed up for the doctor to check over.

"Do we really need all of the bandages, Randy?"

"Damned if I know. That depends on what happens this summer, honey. If those tyrants from FEMA try to seize our gardens, there'll be trouble for sure. Did I tell you that Jim slipped and called me Dad?"

"Mary does that a lot."

"What do you mean?"

"She occasionally calls me Mom and sometimes refers to you as Daddy."

"That's nice, but I don't want them to forget their parents. Lord knows their mother worked herself to death providing for them. Anyone who was killed in Iraq is a hero in my book, even if all he got was a couple of campaign ribbons and a Purple Heart. Has she ever said what happened to him?"

"IED, I think."

"Jim doesn't talk about his father, I think he feels betrayed."

"James Sr. promised not to get hurt and got killed?"

"Something like that I suppose. Any regrets?"

"How can you ask such a thing? I regret not being able to have our own kids, but I somehow think they would have grown up to be a lot like Jim and Mary."

"I was concerned at first; they had a tough life for a couple of 13 year old children. I can't understand why their mother didn't take time to get the shots or Tamiflu."

"She may have been worried about them, Randy. Some people think they're immune to things like the flu or that it isn't as bad as everyone says."

"That's all we heard on the news for what, 5 years?"

"Yes, but some people may have been overly confident when it didn't mutate back in 2006. The talk of a possible pandemic was all the news talked about back in 2005."

"They cried 'Wolf' too early."

o

"Hi Doc, we brought in all the discarded drugs and the questionable one. Can you look over the one we have questions about?"

"Sure Randy. Take the discards to the hospital pharmacy and they see that they're properly disposed of. Hmm, you need some new antibiotics and they're hard to come by. I'll write the prescriptions, but you may have to go to the hospital in Garden City to get them filled. I call them and let them know you're coming over. I hear you aren't planting crops this year."

"We giving the land a rest and indirectly protesting the President's orders. We are doing gardens however, so I'll see that you and your wife get all that you need."

"Have you been keeping an eye on Mike's blood pressure?"

"It runs about 115 over 75. I have noticed that he's complained of night sweats."

"Did you check his blood sugar?"

"He wouldn't let me."

"Thinks he's bulletproof, I'll bet. Most men do, you know. Tell him I said to let you check it. Better yet, I have a coupon for a free tester. They give them away and make it up by the high price on testing strips. The government pays for 80% of the cost of the strips

through Medicare, at least they used to."

"I think I need to replace my strips, they may have expired."

"Don't buy more than a box of 100; Randy you only have them to test other people's blood."

"Sure, doc."

o

"Honey, I have to go to Garden City to fill some of these prescriptions, want to ride along?"

"I'll be ready when you get here."

"Drive your car to town and we'll leave it sit."

"Ok."

I cooled my heels for maybe 30 minutes waiting for June to arrive. She had a shopping list for Wally World in Garden City. We did the hospital pharmacy first and then hit Wal-Mart. I got Mike the blood sugar tester there plus new strips for the two of us. The coupon was for the One Touch kit. The unit we had was made by Bayer and called Ascensia Elite XL. We also had an older Glucometer Elite by Bayer, but it took 60 seconds to read the strips. If you have expired strips, you can always test them with the bottle of control solution, if properly stored, they sometimes last longer. When we got home, I took Mike his new One Touch.

"What's this for?"

"Doctor's orders. He said for you to test your blood. How long has it been since you've eaten? The kit was free, but you owe me for the extra test strips."

"About 6 hours. Use yours and I take this one back. Look it's good; I have plenty of blood sugar. What does 240 mean?"

"Normal range is about 70-110ml/dl. Are you thirsty all of the time, go to the toilet a lot, have night sweats?"

"Yeah, so?"

"Welcome to the club, I'll check with Doc, but I suspect you're diabetic. You test your fasting blood sugar tomorrow morning when you first get up and give me a call. Then I'll call Doc, but he'll probably want to see you."

o

The standard test for diabetes include: OGTT (Oral Glucose Tolerance Test), FPG, (Fasting Plasma Glucose Test) and the usual blood draw where blood serum level of glucose are measured. People with high triglycerides or cholesterol may be pre-disposed to insulin resistant diabetes (type 2). Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body's immune system destroys the beta cells in the pancreas and gestational diabetes is a condition characterized by high blood glucose levels that is first recognized during pregnancy. While only 1 in 250 diabetics are type 1, as a whole, about 6% of the population has diabetes. It might be less now after the war, more people are getting more exercise. That's one of the many reasons that doctors worry about obesity in children. 150 years ago when farming was a lot of manual labor, you didn't see many fat farmers; then came the gleaner, the tractor and all of those implements to make life easier, increase production and reduce labor.

A point was made about the SUREVENT™ Disposable Automatic Resuscitator and advised that it required bottled oxygen to work the vent. We had 2 200ft³ bottles of oxygen at the house and 2 portable oxygen cylinders we always carried in the truck and car. 200ft³ is 5,663 liters of oxygen at 2,200psi and the jumbo D (portable) bottle holds 647 liters, enough to supply 12 lpm for 54 minutes. We were out in the Country and who knows how long it would take to treat and transport a patient to town? Masks come in different capacities: low-flow (< 5 lpm), medium-flow (5 -10 lpm) and high-flow (8-10 lpm). We never had to resort to using the SURVENT Resuscitators during the pandemic.

We also had an oxygen concentrator with a capacity of 10 lpm. It didn't have enough pressure to work the SUREVENT without an accessory to pressurize the oxygen. Hospital oxygen systems are relatively high pressured systems and will run all medical devices. That's why you need an air pump to run a nebulizer; the oxygen concentrator lacks the pressure. We bought the bottles new from a cylinder company. Most people on supplemental oxygen use it at a rate of 2 lpm. USP oxygen is either 93% or 99% pure. Concentrators are tested to make sure they deliver at least 93% pure oxygen.

There are three ways to dispense oxygen in the home. Compressed oxygen gas and liquid oxygen are two ways to have oxygen delivered to the home. Oxygen gas can be compressed and stored in tanks or cylinders of steel or aluminum. These tanks come in many sizes; larger ones are usually left in the bedroom, and smaller ones are used for leaving the house. Liquid oxygen is made by cooling the oxygen gas, which changes it to a liquid form. It is often used by people who are more active because larger amounts of oxygen can be stored in smaller, more convenient containers than compressed oxygen. The disadvantage is that it cannot be kept for a long time because it will evaporate.

In addition, oxygen concentrators are available to deliver higher concentrations in the home. An oxygen concentrator is an electric device about the size of an end table. It produces oxygen by concentrating the oxygen that is already in the air and eliminating other gases. This method is less expensive, easier to maintain, and doesn't require re-

filling, but it is not portable. Some oxygen concentrators, however, give off heat and are noisy. Back-up methods are necessary in case of a power failure, and the electric bill may rise. For some patients, oxygen concentrators may not deliver adequate oxygen.

For people who do not get enough oxygen naturally, supplements of oxygen can have several benefits. Supplemental oxygen can improve their sleep and mood, increase their mental alertness and stamina, and allow their bodies to carry out normal functions. It also prevents heart failure in people with severe lung disease. Oxygen at very high levels over a long period of time can be toxic and very harmful to one's health; therefore, a doctor's prescription is required.

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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a term referring to two lung diseases, chronic bronchitis and emphysema, that are characterized by obstruction to airflow that interferes with normal breathing. Both of these conditions frequently co-exist, hence physicians prefer the term COPD. It does not include other obstructive diseases such as asthma.

Chronic bronchitis is the inflammation and eventual scarring of the lining of the bronchial tubes. When the bronchi are inflamed and or infected, less air is able to flow to and from the lungs and a heavy mucus or phlegm is coughed up. The condition is defined by the presence of a mucus-producing cough most days of the month, three months of a year for two successive years without other underlying disease to explain the cough.

This inflammation eventually leads to scarring of the lining of the bronchial tubes. Once the bronchial tubes have been irritated over a long period of time, excessive mucus is produced constantly, the lining of the bronchial tubes becomes thickened, an irritating cough develops, and air flow may be hampered, the lungs become scarred. The bronchial tubes then make an ideal breeding place for bacterial infections within the airways, which eventually impedes airflow.

Emphysema begins with the destruction of air sacs (alveoli) in the lungs where oxygen from the air is exchanged for carbon dioxide in the blood. The walls of the air sacs are thin and fragile. Damage to the air sacs is irreversible and results in permanent "holes" in the tissues of the lower lungs. As air sacs are destroyed, the lungs are able to transfer less and less oxygen to the bloodstream, causing shortness of breath. The lungs also lose their elasticity, which is important to keep airways open. The patient experiences great difficulty exhaling.

Emphysema doesn't develop suddenly. It comes on very gradually. Years of exposure to the irritation of cigarette smoke usually precede the development of emphysema. Of the estimated 3.1 million Americans ever diagnosed with emphysema, 95 percent were 45 or older. The only way to know for sure which one you have is to autopsy the body.

In the 21st Century, the FDA approved home defibrillators and you could easily get an

Rx for a portable oxygen bottle in case you had a heart attack. Isn't science grand? The thing was, the equipment was expensive and the average guy didn't have the stuff sitting around unless the doctor ordered it. Try and get a defibrillator or oxygen if you didn't have either COPD or a heart disorder. Many of the people who needed the equipment were on fixed incomes. It became the rage to implant combination pacemaker-defibrillators and then they had a product recall. This wasn't like changing the batteries in your flashlight, you know.

When Paramedics first arose, the need envisioned was immediate treatment of heart attacks. Generally patients treated immediately had a much increased chance of survival. Paramedics would reestablish a normal sinus rhythm in the heart and give the patient oxygen. They might administer drugs, as appropriate, and transport the patient or send them to the hospital in an ambulance. For example, LA City had Paramedic ambulances and LA County Paramedic trucks.

With the emergence of sophisticated medical treatments, a dilemma arose. Do you keep the patient alive even though the EEG tells you they're brain dead or in an irreversible coma? **The only assurance that anyone has that his or her wishes will be carried out is a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare Purposes or a Living Will. Do yourself a favor and make your wishes known in a legal document before the question comes up. You can't do that if you end up in a persistent vegetative state. DNR means Do Not Resuscitate.** A persistent vegetative state (PVS) is a condition of patients with severe brain damage in whom coma has progressed to a state of wakefulness without detectable awareness. There is controversy in both the medical and legal fields as to whether this condition is irreversible.

Many patients emerge from a vegetative state within a few weeks, but those who do not recover within 30 days are said to be in a persistent vegetative state. The chances of recovery depend on the extent of injury to the brain and the patient's age, with younger patients having a better chance of recovery than older patients. Generally adults have a 50 percent chance and children a 60 percent chance of recovering consciousness from a PVS within the first 6 months. After a year, the chances that a PVS patient will regain consciousness are very low and most patients who do recover consciousness experience significant disability.

The longer a patient is in a PVS, the more severe the resulting disabilities will be. Rehabilitation can contribute to recovery, but many patients never progress to the point of being able to take care of themselves. Few people have been reported to recover from PVS. Some authorities hold that PVS is, in fact, irreversible, and that the reportedly recovered patients were not suffering from true PVS. This conclusion is in dispute, however, as there have been cases like those of a man in Australia who was closely followed for years before suddenly *waking up*. In the United States, it is estimated that there may be between 15,000-40,000 patients who are in a persistent vegetative state, but due to poor nursing home records exact figures are hard to determine.

Terminology in this area is somewhat confused. While the term *persistent vegetative*

state is the most frequent in media usage and legal provisions, it is discouraged by neurologists, who favor the use of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP)(1996) typology which refers only to the vegetative state, the continuing vegetative state, and the permanent vegetative state. This typology distinguishes various stages of the condition rather than using one term for them all.

The highly publicized case of Terri Schiavo involved disputes over a diagnosis of PVS given by several court-appointed doctors. Ultimately the court challenges were unsuccessful and Schiavo's feeding tube was removed, leading to her subsequent death. In an autopsy after she died, microscopic examination revealed extensive damage to nearly all brain regions, including the cerebral cortex, the thalami, the basal ganglia, the hippocampus, the cerebellum, and the midbrain. The neuropathologic changes in her brain were precisely of the type seen in patients who enter a PVS following cardiac arrest. Throughout the cerebral cortex, the large pyramidal neurons that comprise some 70 percent of cortical cells – critical to the functioning of the cortex – were completely lost. The pattern of damage to the cortex, with injury tending to worsen from the front of the cortex to the back, is also typical. There was marked damage to important relay circuits deep in the brain (the thalami) – another common pathologic finding in cases of PVS. The damage was, in the words of Thogmartin, *irreversible, and no amount of therapy or treatment would have regenerated the massive loss of neurons*. It was a lose-lose situation, for everyone.

o

"Randy, this is Mike, it was down to 160, that's good, right?"

"It's better. You'd better see Doc Williams. In my humble opinion, you've qualified as a diabetic, but Doc can run some tests and you will know for sure. Then, if you need medication, he can prescribe it. The secret to controlling the disease is diet and exercise plus medication if needed."

The rule of thumb I was taught was 3 instances over 140 or 1 over 200mg/dl. An OGTT would quickly establish what Mike's condition was. Unfortunately that involves getting stuck a few times. It is better to use the serum glucose level. According to the NIH:

Levels up to 100 mg/dl are considered normal.

Levels between 100 and 126 mg/dl are referred to as impaired fasting glucose or pre-diabetes. These levels are considered to be risk factors for type 2 diabetes and its complications.

Diabetes is typically diagnosed when fasting blood glucose levels are 126 mg/dl or higher. Note: mg/dl = milligrams per deciliter ($\frac{1}{10}$ th liter)

So much for my rule of thumb.

o

It turned out that Mike was diabetic and for now would be put on pills. Doc started him on Avandaryl 2+2. I guess GSK finally figured out the paperwork. If Mike took care of himself, there was a good chance he'd avoid becoming insulin dependent.

I assume by now you understand H5N1, PVS, diabetes and COPD. However, if you get too much radiation, there isn't a pill that will do much more than ease your pain. No special medicines can cure a person of radiation *sickness*. Sometimes cells will repair themselves. Radiation sickness is not contagious or infectious. One person cannot catch it from another. The patient should be made as comfortable as possible. Keep him lying down, comfortably warm and resting. Give the patient aspirin for headache or general discomfort – 2 tablets every 3 to 4 hours (half a tablet for children under 12). Motion sickness tablets may help relieve nausea. For bleeding gums or sore mouth, use a mouthwash made up of a half teaspoon salt to a quart of water. For vomiting or diarrhea, have the patient drink a glass of salt and soda solution (one teaspoon salt and one half teaspoon soda to a quart of cool water). Diarrhea medication (loperamide HCL) or a mixture of kaolin and pectin may help relieve diarrhea.

You do know that Kansas is in Tornado Alley, right? Parts of Kansas get 1-5 tornadoes per 1,000mi² while the central and eastern parts get 6-10 tornadoes per 1,000mi². The areas around Dallas-Ft. Worth and Oklahoma City get > 15 tornadoes per 1,000mi². We had one set down in late spring that tore up some pasture and the ground we were leaving lay fallow. By the time I saw it, it was pulling back up into the clouds. Our area is one of the 1-5 areas of Kansas. Those clouds came up rather sudden and I was watching the sky, just in case. Jim and Mary were in their last month of their junior year and at school.

It might turn out to be one of those summers where tornadoes popped up now and then; I guess I'd better keep a radio on. If we had to have a tornado summer, it was better that we didn't plant crops, a tornado will suck up quite a bit of corn or wheat. I decided to plant 40' of field corn next to the sweet corn to get 2 acres of corn. We could treat the wheat and barley crops as food crops. If you can't grow wheat, don't try barley. It's a particularly nasty crop to harvest. It's also fragile; a bad rainstorm could ruin a crop.

Barley is malted to make beer and whiskey and is used in soups. Another common use is to make Postum, a coffee substitute. Charles William "C.W." Post (1854 - 1914) began his breakfast empire in 1892 when he opened La Vita Inn sanitarium on this site. Post's first commercial success occurred in 1894 when he created the hot beverage Postum. In 1896 he organized the Postum Cereal Company. His continued experiments with grains resulted in Grape-Nuts, his first cold cereal, in 1897. In 1908-09 sales from Grape-Nuts, Postum, and Post Toasties surpassed \$5 million. Upon Post's death, his daughter Marjorie ran the company, continuing to advertise extensively, and expanding the product line. In 1929 Postum became the General Foods Corporation. The Philip Morris Company purchased General Foods in 1985, and the plant became part of Kraft Foods in 1989. Check your boxes of Post cereals and see if they contain barley. Grape

Nuts got its name because Post claimed the sugar converted to Grape sugar during processing and the cereal was Nutty tasting. Dr. Kellogg probably never forgave him.

o

It didn't take long to plant the wheat and barley and I had the garden plowed as soon as the ground allowed, in this case, April 29, 2013, a Monday. I used the planter to plant 8 rows of sweet corn and 8 rows of field corn. I could also plant the peas and change the plates to plant the green beans for June, saving her time and allowing her to plant spuds. The living room and dining rooms were full up with tomato plants and pepper plants, we didn't have a greenhouse. Maybe with the free time I had this summer, I should get some plastic and build one. It would be even better if I could get Plexiglas.

The plants were in flats making it easier to move them around and share the sunlight coming in the windows. We got the flats from Maverick Manufacturing Company in Clarksville, Texas. They delivered if your order was big enough and I made sure it was. We got the Square Pot 3" - Flat with 35 Pots, 12 Flats per bundle – IF PN# 335 – Green \$14.41 bundle (420 pots). There wasn't room to walk, but we had racks (similar to bread racks), that helped on space, but not on the light. By using the 3" pots, we didn't have to transplant until it was time to plant the garden.

"We can't do this next year."

"What?"

"Fill the living room and dining room with racks of plant flats."

"I was considering building a greenhouse."

"Use Plexiglas, those rolls of plastic aren't durable."

"I will, if I can find Plexiglas."

"Can't you just get a contractor to build a greenhouse?"

"I'll need plans."

An Unlikely Outcome – Chapter 28

A word of explanation: The National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record ("NFR&TR") maintained by the National Firearms Act ("NFA") Branch of BATF pursuant to the National Firearms Act of 1934, (26 USC §§ 5801-5872) is where all records of NFA firearms are listed. I refer to the NFA and NFR interchangeably. Maybe I shouldn't, but I do. In personal terms, it's something you can't legally have anywhere I've ever lived. That includes Kansas, although I've never lived there. It wasn't a typo.

o

Talking about building a greenhouse actually doing it weren't the same. I couldn't find Plexiglas although I did download a plan for a greenhouse from the University of Tennessee website. I went looking for a contractor who could convert the plans into a finished building. Strike 2, I couldn't find anyone who had the know-how AND could get the materials. So, I contacted the company in Clarksville, TX and ask them if they knew where I could find a greenhouse contractor. They didn't, but they did know where I could buy a kit and assemble it myself: Texas Greenhouse Company, Fort Worth, Texas. The company also built greenhouses, so you know what I did. I hired them to build a greenhouse about the size of the plan I had, their American Classic model. I'd 'supervise' the construction, from a distance.

I couldn't have assembled the thing, it was steel and aluminum framed and I chose polycarbonate panels. We had a place to start plants the following year and given the size of the greenhouse, we could start everyone's plants. The garden was in by the time the company showed up to erect the greenhouse. June wouldn't let me watch, saying that if I had time to stand around and watch, I could help in the garden. It suited me; I cultivated the things I planted, greatly reducing the hoeing needed. In the afternoon, I watched them working on the greenhouse.

It wouldn't take much of a tornado to take that greenhouse out; did I get my timing wrong? They were still running disaster stuff on TV, and I wondered where they got the programs, sometimes. A pal of mine from Iowa had lived through the worst tornado in Iowa history on May 15, 1968. It was an F-5 that left a trail of destruction on the ground for 55 miles. It had by passed most towns only striking his home town of Charles City. Records showed it to be the most powerful tornado to ever hit Iowa and it wiped out about $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ of Charles City leaving 13 dead and 34 seriously injured. The tornado cut a path four to six blocks wide for three miles through the main business district and residential areas, destroying 60 commercial buildings, three schools, six churches and 500 residences. The town also had tornadoes in 1858, 1878 and 1908.

Must have been a busy news day, that was little more than a month after the King assassination and for whatever reason news coverage of that killer tornado got little press coverage. What was the deal, not enough dead? Six years later when the super outbreak occurred and Xenia, Ohio lost 34 people and you'd have thought it was the end of the world. *Life isn't always fair, Jim*, was what I'd told the boy when the subject had

come up. That town in Iowa I mentioned was one of the last bastions of true conservatism. Maybe not politically, but in the way they lived their lives. People don't live forever and that would change. But if you looked at the obits in their newspaper, most of the deaths were people who had been on social security for ages. The unusual death was someone under 50.

o

Those people assembling the greenhouse must have done it before, it was slam bam, thank you ma'am and they were done. I'd gone ahead and gotten the automatic vents, maybe I could spend all of our money and go on the dole. Kansas, in the summer of 2013 wasn't a pleasant place.

"I'm from FEMA."

"So?"

"We're going to seize your garden."

"No you're not."

"Why not?" he smirked.

"My garden is that little patch over there. The remainder belongs to the people in Lakin; I just gave them spots to use."

"According to our records, you have a dairy herd."

"I do, yes, but we're producing cheese and it's aging. It isn't fit to eat at the moment."

"What about the livestock?"

"None of the animals are up to market weight."

"Big wind turbine."

"It is, sure wish it had a bigger generator. Seems like the 200' tower is going to waste."

"Nice greenhouse."

"Yep, they just finished it up a couple of weeks ago. We got tired of tripping on flats of plants we started for the folks in town."

"Why don't you have crops planted?"

"Well, I'll tell you. Ever since the war, we produced soybeans and corn to manufacture

biodiesel, which we sold to the City and County. The soil is near worn out, had to let it rest. Now if you folks with the federal government could see you way clear to providing anhydrous ammonia, insecticides, herbicides and all the modern things we need to farm on tired soil, I might be able to plant crops. Sure be nice if you could get my old Ford tractor repaired, we going to need to farm with horses this coming year."

"We'll be back."

"Don't bother; if we do start producing crops, it will be to make biodiesel and that's all spoken for, you'll have to talk to the City and County."

"What about that livestock when it's ready for market?"

"Spoken for, I needed money for the greenhouse and pre-sold the hogs and steers."

"Like I said, we'll be back."

"We'll be waiting."

o

You may recall I told you I had some parts for the Ford. I was short a few parts we needed to rebuild the tranny and the rear end. As luck would have it, I found a dealer who had the missing parts and his mechanic was familiar with working on the old Fords. I felt like I'd won the lottery. When he called and said the tractor was ready, I felt like Dr. Frankenstein, *It's alive!* I didn't let him repaint it, I didn't want anyone except the inner circle to know that my Ford was running, especially not the guy from FEMA.

"How you make out with the FEMA guy, fellas?"

"He wanted to seize the gardens and I told him they belonged to Lakin residents. Then he went on about the dairy herd and I told him the cheese was aging. He got right huffy, but what could he do?"

"I had about the same thing happen on my farm, Randy. I'll tell you though, I think he has it in for you, he thinks you lied about the wind turbine and a few other things, like pre-selling your livestock."

"Not as dumb as he looked, Mike. Of course I lied. Hell, I even got the Ford rebuilt, finally. If we get good weather, we could have a bumper crop next year. I told that guy I'd committed the biodiesel to the City and County. We're going to need to restock our supplies of hay and livestock feed this coming year, do y'all want to go all out on soybeans?"

"Suits me," Paul replied and Mike agreed.

"Say how about we butcher a beef and have a big barbeque on Independence Day? We could invite those National Guard troops from Garden City and tell them it's just to show our appreciation to the military for all they've done."

"How did you know that I had started a big batch of homebrew?" Mike asked.

"I didn't, will you have enough?"

"I think so; I took a few bushels of the barley and malted it then got some hops and brewer's yeast from a store in Garden City. I'll have to rack it and store it in barrels, but we can have an old time on 4th of July."

"We better invite the Sheriff," Paul suggested. "If the party gets a little wild, who can anyone call?"

Mike had been experimenting through the winter, getting a brewing recipe he was happy with. His beer had a mild flavor, plenty of kick, more American than German. He brought a six pack of bottled beer we could taste. Paul was going to have to start making wine, and then we'd have a well-rounded production of alky-hall. Which, in a manner of thinking, was humorous, we didn't drink much. I still had an unopened bottle of Jack Daniel's Tennessee Sippin' Whiskey somewhere around the house and an unopened bottle of VO. Liquor in a glass bottle doesn't improve with age, it just gets older. A 12-year-old Bourbon was in the barrel that long, who knows how long it had been in the bottle?

The product that did improve with age in the bottle was port wine. Vintage ports are aged in barrels for a maximum of 2 years before bottling, and often require another 5 to 15 years of aging in the bottle before reaching what is considered proper drinking age. Since they are aged in barrels for only a short time, they retain their dark ruby color and fresh fruit flavors. Particularly fine vintage ports can continue to gain complexity and drink wonderfully for decades after they were bottled, and therefore can be particularly sought after and expensive wines. 1945 Port is a classic and has a 'hold or drink' recommendation, suggesting that the wine can still improve.

"I've never tried to roast a side of beef on a spit over a fire before, how long do you need to cook it?"

"I'm not sure, until it's done? I think maybe you've seen one too many movies."

The answer was actually several hours, maybe more than a day. It was an adaptation of original barbecue where people in the Caribbean slow cooked a whole goat. It took low heat and smoke for a very long time. We started on July 2nd. Mike had acquired several empty beer kegs and cleaned them then kegged the beer and had it chilling. We planned on 200 people, the National Guard Company had about 130 troops who could attend, and then there was the Sheriff, Deputies and their families. If you figured a cup of macaroni or potato salad for 200 people, we'd need about several gallons of each.

$200 \div 16 = 12\frac{1}{2}$ gallons; probably 50-50 so maybe 7 gallons of each. Figure on 100 of the 200 people drinking beer, for sure 2 barrels of beer. By definition a barrel of beer is 31 gallons. Barbecue sauce, on the side, maybe yea so many sliced tomatoes and don't forget the watermelons or the corn on the cob. It's called advertising or making friends. Whatever it's called it may help the next time the FEMA guy shows up.

A good time was had by all and I had the hangover to prove it. Not being a drinking man, I got waylaid by the high proof beer Mike brewed. Tasted mighty fine, but it sort of snuck up on you. Most standard bottled beer is about 5% alcohol. Canadian beer sometimes runs to 8% and Carlings has a commercial 10% brew. Mike homebrew was every bit of that. The troops came in trucks and the designated drivers were limited in their drinking by a very cautious CO. Mike figured on that and had a few six-packs as care packages for the drivers.

The beef was cooked *to a turn*, rather good for a bunch of amateurs. When everyone had their fill, the wives packed up any leftovers for the troops, mostly in empty plastic coffee cans. We told the CO it was for the troops who hadn't been able to come to the celebration. I think we made some new friends, which was the whole idea in the first place. The only thing missing was fireworks, but by then we weren't in any condition to be playing with explosives. The kids ended up doing the milking and taking care of the livestock.

"I can't believe I drank the whole thing. Ohhh, I can't believe I drank the whole thing."

"At least you're not a mean drunk, Randy. I don't think I've ever seen you so drunk. Mike left you a six-pack just in case you needed some hair of the dog."

"Good, padlock the refrigerator. That stuff is strong as wine and goes down about like coke."

"The kids took care of the livestock last night and this morning. Are you going to be well enough to milk tonight?"

"Huh?" I'd heard her, but the thought got in my brain and started fighting with those demons that were pounding on the drums. It was the second time in my life I'd gotten that drunk. The first time was in the Army, before I'd met June, $\frac{1}{2}$ a lifetime ago. She handed me 2 aspirin, a glass of water and a cup of coffee. She said I should eat something, but my stomach felt like the food I'd eaten the day before was still there waiting for my stomach to wake up and digest it. I took the aspirin and in a while the drummer got a little tired.

"Did you try that homebrew that Mike made?"

"No, but I'm not sure I want to."

"Well, you have 6 bottles to sample, but I wouldn't recommend more than one at a time,"

I croaked. "I'll do the milking tonight, if the cows cooperate. What day is it?"

"Friday, July 5th, 2013."

"I knew better than that, I wonder how I slipped up and allowed myself to get drunk."

"This wasn't the first time?"

"The last time was before I met you, June."

"Do you want something to eat now?"

"I'd better wait until my stomach finishes digesting what I ate yesterday. It was good though, I think."

"Maybe that was your problem. Every time someone came to compliment the 3 of you they brought you each a glass of beer. I'll wager that both Paul and Mike feel about like you do."

"Do you suppose?"

"Marilyn and Rachel had to drive them home."

"How come you're not chewing me out?"

"Make a pattern of it and I will. It obvious that you didn't set out to drink too much; so what good would it do? If I see you headed that way again, I mention it and if you don't respond, you'll pay, big time."

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As my body hydrated itself, I began to feel better. It took a couple more aspirin to put the drummer to sleep. I wasn't concerned that I had a drinking problem, unlike a drunk; I wasn't in any rush to drown the drummer. I don't know what really accounted for my behavior, probably the built up stress. It began accumulating when FEMA showed up and our first reaction to their appearance wasn't anything I was going to write home about. However, if they persisted, that could change. Our venture up in Leoti, wasn't our finest hour, we just did what needed doing and made ourselves some good friends along the way. Was FEMA in every county? I didn't think so, or they would have had people in Lakin as well as in Garden City. I'd imagine they were there because of processing plant.

I'd told that FEMA guy we'd be waiting for him and we would, with loaded weapons. I

rather suspected that he'd have trouble getting the National Guard troops to back his play. At least, I hoped he would, otherwise we had butchered a steer and gone through food for 200 people for nothing.

Cheese was aged in a cellar, to maintain an even cool temperature. We didn't have cellars for cheese aging so we'd done the next best thing, built buildings that we buried in up to 6' of soil. It was tough getting the hang of it, but once we figured it out, it wasn't such a big deal. Cheese was made from the milk solids that you took off by way of curdling the milk. The amount of fat in the cheese varies. Cheddar is an English cheese and Jack Cheese is uncolored Colby Cheese. We'd probably have to make some Mozzarella for the pizza crowd. The pizza cheese is the string variety of Mozzarella was originally made from buffalo milk.

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Sunday, July 7, 2013...

"Phone, it's the Sheriff, you guy have a call up."

"What's up, Sheriff?"

"We were just sitting down to Sunday dinner, but it will keep."

"Have you called Mike and Paul? Never mind, they're pulling up outside now. I'll grab my stuff and we'll be there in 2 shakes."

June handed me my ALICE gear, rifle and medical bag. I slid into the gear and rushed to the waiting pickup. It was Ray at the wheel and neither Mike nor Paul was smiling.

"Fill me in."

"The Sheriff called us first since we were the furthest away. That FEMA guy called in a bunch of feds when the National Guard refused to back his play. They're on a farm outside of Deerfield and they came up against some farmers who won't play ball with them. The word is that there has already been some shooting. The Sheriff called in Mutual Assistance from Finney County but they'll be slow responding. For a while it's just going to be Kearny County Deputies and reserves against what the Sheriff says are a rather large group of feds."

"The Sheriff told me about the same Randy, FEMA has turned into a group of Storm Troopers. This is the second place they hit today and they either arrested or killed everyone at the first place they hit."

"So it's going to be 30 or so reserves and the 10 members of the Sheriff's Department up against the feds? You don't have a better idea how many feds do you?"

"Maybe 60 give or take, the Sheriff wasn't sure."

"What are they doing?"

"Grain and cattle trucks, they're trying to seize the farmers' livelihoods."

"They waited for us," Ray announced. "Hang on; the Sheriff has the pedal to the metal."

*You heard 'bout the legend of Jesse James
and John Henry, just to mention some names.
Well, there's a truck-drivin' legend in the South today,
a man called Bandit from Atlanta, GA.*

*Every gearjammer knows his name.
They swear he got asphalt a-runnin' in his veins,
a foot like lead and nerves like steel.
He's gonna go to glory ridin' eighteen wheels.*

*He left Atlanta back in '63,
haulin' him a load up to Tennessee.
He hit Mont Eagle and it started to rain
so hard he couldn't even see the passin' lane.*

*Well, he started down the grade when he lost a gear,
he reached for them brakes, found he had no air.
The mount Eagle grade is steep and long
and everybody that seen it thought the bandit was gone.*

*Well, his truck Jackknife turned completely around,
he was comin' down backwards 'bout the speed of sound.
A lot of folks seen him and they all say
he had his head out the window yellin' "Clear the way!"*

*Well, he got to the bottom safe and sound
Everybody asked Bandit how he made it down.
He said, "Folks, when the truck picked up too much speed,
I just run along beside it and drug my feet!"*

*You heard the legend of Jesse James
and John Henry just to mention some names.
Well, there's a truck-drivin' legend in the South today,
a man called Bandit from Atlanta, GA.*

*Every gearjammer knows his name.
They swear he's got asphalt a-runnin' in his veins,
a foot like lead and nerves like steel.*

He's goin' up to glory ridin' eighteen wheels.

*Well I'm east bound and down, loaded up and truckin'
a' we gonna' do what they say can't be done
We've got a long way to go, and a short time to get there
I'm east bound, just watch 'ole' Bandit run.*

*Keep your foot hard on the peddle son, never mind them brakes
let it all hang out 'cause we've got a run to make
The boys are thirsty in Atlanta, and there's beer in Texarkana
and we'll bring it back no matter what it takes*

*Well I'm east bound and down, loaded up and truckin'
a' we gonna' do what they say can't be done
We've got a long way to go, and a short time to get there
I'm east bound, just watch 'ole' Bandit run.*

*Old Smokey's got them ears on, he's hot on your trail
And he ain't gonna' rest 'til you're in jail
So, you gotta' dodge him, you gotta' duck him
you gotta' keep that diesel truckin'
just put that hammer down and give it hell*

Bandit: What's your twenty?

*Snowman: About fifteen miles this side of Mississippi
Whoa, hold it
I just passed another Kojak with a Kodak
This place is crawlin' with bears
Where the hell are you
Come back*

*Bandit: I'm still tryin' to get rid of that Texas County Mountie
I don't know what the hell he wants*

*Snowman: You know what he wants
I mean how'd you like to be the dude that handcuffs a legend*

*Bandit: Listen, give me five minutes
We're gonna put some moves on that mother
I'll meet you at Ol' Miss*

*Snowman: Well, you better hurry or we can just kiss that money goodbye
You understand that*

Bandit: I read you loud and clear

Ten four

Snowman: You got the one Snowman
I'm east bound and down

We were there, cripes, there must have been closer to 100 of those feds. All wearing Blackhawk tactical gear with FEMA in big white letters on the back. They had us outnumbered 2 or 3 to 1 and they were wearing H&K handguns and carrying MP5K-PDWs. There wasn't a smiling face in the bunch. They were surrounding a group of farmers, maybe 15 altogether, holding their hands high. We locked and loaded as we slid to a stop. Then we bailed out to back the Sheriff's play.

"Kearny County Sheriff, what do you think you're doing?"

"Enforcing the Presidential Order, Sheriff, stay out of it."

"I can't do that, unless you have a court order authorizing the seizure of that property."

"Don't need one, Sheriff, pursuant to EO 10999, the government is taking over all food resources for redistribution pursuant to EO 10990."

"Not in my County you're not."

BLAM. That FEMA man shot the Sheriff and got him right between the eyes. I heard someone yell, *Resist the tyrants*, and all hell broke loose.

There were 40 of us, plus the 15 farmers, against near 100 of those FEMA jack-booted thugs. FEMA opened fire and Ray went down with a shot. Mike, Paul and I took cover and returned fire. I worked my way to Ray and slapped on an ACS, using the compression bandage to hold it in place. He was hit in the shoulder, but I took it that he would survive.

Moving back to cover, half dragging Ray, I was grazed myself, but it wasn't bleeding so bad I needed to worry about it. It was probably only seconds, perhaps minutes, but it seemed like hours. We were taking them down but we were losing people too.

"I'm hit," Paul yelled. Last thing he ever said, got him in the heart and when I checked, he didn't have a pulse. I changed magazines and got a couple more of them when Mike cried out something indistinguishable. I moved to him, and that was 3 of us down, Ray, Paul and now Mike. Ray was still firing so I guess I shouldn't count him out yet. I felt like saying, *Jim he's dead*. Like the old doc on Star Trek said in nearly every show. Mike was gone too.

I heard a sound and looked around and here came those National Guard troops and they were firing on the FEMA guys. Oops, empty magazine, I swapped them out and kept shooting. Bang, I got another one, but he got a strange look on his face, pointed

that MP5K-PDW at me and held down the trigger as he fell. I felt the jolts as first one, then two and finally three of his rounds hit me. He was a dead man getting revenge. I grabbed at my first responders bag to get an ACS, but it was so far away, I couldn't reach it.

Ray grabbed the bag and started slapping on the bandages, but I was losing blood fast from 3 wounds. Everything went black as I passed out.

*Bang Bang, you shot me down
Bang Bang, I hit the ground
Bang Bang, that awful sound
Bang Bang, my baby shot me down*

*I was five and you were six
We rode on horses made of sticks
I wore black, you wore white
You'd would always win the fight*

(chorus)

*Seasons came and changed the time
I grew up I called you mine
You would always laugh and say
Remember when we used to play*

(chorus)

*Music played and people sang
Just for me the church bells rang
After echoes form a gun
We both vowed that we'd be one*

*Now you're gone I don't know why
Sometimes I cry
You didn't say goodbye
You didn't take the time to lie*

(chorus)

*You shot me right between the eyes
You meant to paralyze
Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang
Oh oh baby, I'm laying on the ground*

*I ain't never going down
Bang, bang oh baby, oh baby*

*Come on back to me
You'll see how sweet it's gonna be
Bang, Bang*

"Yes ma'am the National Guard medic put him on an IV of something, Ringer's I think, but he'd lost too much blood and died before they could get him to the hospital. Paul was killed first and then Mike. Finally, Randy got one of those FEMA guys and the guy gunned him down as he fell," Ray explained.

"Did he suffer?" June asked.

"It hurts like the dickens to get shot, but he had already been grazed once. I don't know that he really felt those last 3 bullets. I put on those bandages, but I think it was too late. They started it ma'am, but those National Guardsmen and what there was left of us finished it. I'm afraid we lost most of our contingent, 37 dead and the other 3 of us wounded. *I don't know what bravery is ma'am, but it seems to me that laying down your life to protect and defend the Constitution of this Country counts for something.*"

The June Webster Saga – Part II

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 1

I made the last entry into Randy's journal, recording what Ray had told me. It couldn't have come at a worst time, Mike, Paul and Randy getting killed, like there is ever a good time for someone to die. Ray had said, *I don't know what bravery is ma'am, but it seems to me that laying down your life to protect and defend the Constitution of this Country counts for something.*

Jim and Mary were as distraught as I was, this was the third time in their lives they'd lost someone they were close to, first their father in Iraq, then their mother to the H5N1 and finally, Randy, a victim of tyranny. The people from Lakin pitched in and made sure we didn't lose any of our garden produce, heck they even canned it for us.

The love of my life, my man, shot and killed by a group of goons from FEMA. Everything needs a beginning and those FEMA jack-booted thugs killing over 40 people in Kearny County, Kansas all over some grain and livestock, couldn't be kept quiet for long.

By the time the mass funeral was held on Thursday, July 12, 2013, there must have been more media in Lakin than residents. They'd shown up on our farms, only to be run off with guns by Don, Jason or Susan. She looked cute holding a M16 with her belly out to there. I suppose we could have made statements, but like Randy once told me, *I understand how Ms. Sheehan feels, but she's going about it the wrong way.*

Jim and Mary would be graduating next spring and with Jason's help Jim and John would farm our 640 acres. I was cut to the quick, broken hearted, but proud of Mike, Paul and Randy. Widows are supposed to wear black at funerals, but Rachel, Marilyn and I brought new red dresses, perhaps to reflect the anger we felt. Randy had an insurance policy, paid in full, for \$300,000 with Principal in Des Moines. Des Moines hadn't been hit by the Chinese on July 4, 2009, thank God for that.

In truth, I didn't want to do anything but grieve. But we couldn't just run to the grocery store for food and what we had in the garden would keep the 3 of us going until the following year. Rather than continue the violence, Randy, Paul and Mike had staged what amounted to a sit-in. They passed on planting crops, except for that corn, barley, oats and wheat Randy wanted for the bourbon he was illegally brewing out in the machine shed and to mix horse feed. He'd gotten his old Ford tractor repaired, but never gotten the chance to use it. I suppose he was a bit obsessive-compulsive, but Randy favored making lists, it was God sent.

"Mom, what are we going to do now?" Mary asked.

"I think the first thing I'm going to do is pay off Rose Hansen and James Jones, Mary. Randy wanted the farm to end up divided between the two of you so I'll just deed it over and you and your brother can decide which halves you want."

"Wasn't the farm in a corporation? Can't you just give us each half of the stock and keep the farm intact?"

"I hadn't thought of that Jim, you're right; it will be easier than I thought. I'll tell you what, we'll divide the stock 3 ways and I'll have the lawyer draw up a new will for me leaving the two of you my one-third went I join Randy."

"I sure hope that's not for a long time," Mary murmured.

"Only time will tell, honey. I won't go looking for it, but if it comes, I face it straight on."

Our husbands had been smarter than we knew, Limited Liability Corporations with the stock held by the husband and wife as Joint Tenants in Common with Rights of Survivorship, whatever that means. Insurance proceeds aren't subject to taxes. The corporation was the beneficiary of the policy and before the kids started back to school, the land was free and clear and we had operating capital.

Jim made a strange comment, "I think I've paid my dues, Mom. First my father in Iraq and now my foster father gunned down by FEMA. Revenge is a dish best served cold; they taught us that in History class."

I wanted a piece of that, but this wasn't the time. I went down Randy's list, topped off the propane, got a load of coal and finished up with the garden. I kept myself busy, idle hands are the Devil's playground and when you're busy, it seems to dull the pain. It was hard going to bed at night, all alone in a king-sized bed. The kids' dog, Shep, seemed to sense how I felt and began to sleep on the floor next to the bed. How we got through the summer of 2013 is anyone's guess, probably thanks to Randy's lists. In a way, it was if he was still here, looking out for us, not buried next to his parents in Lakin.

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Randy hadn't much cared for the media, but in this case, the story of the shootout grew, and people started to compare the Kearny County Massacre to the Branch Davidians and Randy Weaver's standoff on Ruby Ridge. It not only cast the previous events in a better light but it seemed to become the core of some new movement. Here in Kearny County, we had a lot of damage to repair. We'd lost all of the sworn officers of the Sheriff's Department, for example. They hired some Deputies from the Finney County Sheriff's Department and the Garden City Police Department and appointed one of them Acting Sheriff.

President Obama EOs seemed to wither away and FEMA never came back to Garden City. If they had, they'd have probably been shot on sight. There hadn't been elections in 2012, and Obama wasn't in office legally anyway, a situation quickly remedied by Congress which removed both him and Joe. The President until the elections in 2016 would be the former Speaker of the House, a Republican, but more moderate.

In a post-Armageddon world, things were far less than perfect, our Representative Democracy aka Constitutional Republic had to adapt. The Iroquois model of representative government influenced English philosophers, as well as Benjamin Franklin, and inspired the Americans and French to create representative democracies.

The United States Constitution is the supreme law of the United States of America. It was completed on September 17, 1787, with its adoption by the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was later ratified by special conventions in each state. It created a federal union of sovereign states, and a federal government to operate that union. It replaced the less defined union that had existed under the Articles of Confederation. It took effect on March 4, 1789 and has served as a model for the constitutions of numerous other nations. The Constitution of the United States of America is the oldest federal constitution in current use.

It was about as good as a people could get, but it was less than perfect. Most parts of the Constitution didn't require a lot of interpretation. But they were interpreted, and sometimes the results were less than satisfactory. Randy always opposed the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Second Amendment. He took the position that owning firearms and carrying arms was an individual right and should have been written more clearly. Their weapons had been returned to us by those National Guardsmen before they packed up and went home.

The Commanding Officer of that National Guard Company had his own demons to exorcise. First, he had disobeyed what he took to be an unlawful order by FEMA. Then he hadn't arrived at the scene of the Massacre soon enough, according to some. The general sentiment was that had he gone with FEMA in the first place, the bloodshed could have been avoided. We didn't see it the same way as most of the Country. He'd been right to refuse to follow an unlawful order and had arrived quickly, the minute he heard that there was trouble in Kearny County. He had returned home and resigned his Commission. The upper echelons of the military had just wanted to avoid the controversy and had accepted his resignation and dropped the matter.

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Don and Sandy were married and expecting their first child. Then, just after school started, John proposed to Mary and she accepted. They planned to get married in June, just as soon as they graduated. Jim was a bit slower to react, but just before Thanksgiving, he proposed to Julia and she accepted. The four of them talked it over and it was decided to have a single, joint wedding on the date that John and Mary had picked. Randy probably never mentioned last names, did he? The kids' last name was Williams. John's last name was McCartney and Julia's was Schmidt.

I suppose for the sake of clarity, I should recount the names of the people involved:

June Webster, widow of Randy Webster, foster mother of Jim and Mary Williams

Marilyn Johnson, widow of Paul Johnson, mother of Susan Johnson Perkins and Don Johnson

Rachel Jenkins, widow of Mike Jenkins, mother of Ray Jenkins and Sandy Perkins Johnson

Jason and Karen Ralston, parents of Jason and Daniel (our hired hand)

Doctor Samuel Williams, Lakin (Doc)

Jacob and Maureen McLintock, farm near Leoti (Big Jake)

Sam and Sarah Adams, farm near Leoti

Will and Patricia Bonnet, farm near Leoti

Ralph and Johnny Barrows, took care of our wind turbine

Ray is a Reserve Deputy Sheriff with the Kearny County Sheriff's Department and I've been trained as an EMT-2. We have a load of used medical equipment that belongs to Doc and both my late husband and I had been trained in its use. We'd wanted Paramedic training, but ran out of time. The Sheriff had offered to deputize Jason as a Reserve Deputy, but Jason had never taken him up on the offer, a move that probably saved his life. Nevertheless, the certificate that said Jason had completed the necessary training was in the Sheriff's files.

"Mrs. Webster, I suppose I better go ahead and take up that offer to become a Reserve Deputy, Kearny County is a little shorthanded right now."

"Have you talked it over with Karen?"

"She agrees, especially after what happened. Anyone who knew that certificate wasn't the genuine thing is dead, so I think I'll apply. That new Acting Sheriff called and wanted to take me on. Plus I feel like I owe it to Randy's memory. Maybe, if I had been there..."

"You'd be dead too, Jason. I want you to manage the farm. I'll give you the same pay plus 5% of the profits. Jim still needs some guidance and I'm not sure about how much John knows. Randy had planned to build the herd of Clydesdales to 64 working horses. If you have any questions, you'll have to contact Mike McGilvray up in Bird City. I think I'll go back to school and get my Paramedic Certification, maybe even become a PA."

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Physician assistants (PAs) practice medicine under the supervision of physicians and surgeons. They should not be confused with medical assistants, who perform routine clinical and clerical tasks. PAs are formally trained to provide diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive health care services, as delegated by a physician. Working as members of the health care team, they take medical histories, examine and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory tests and X-rays, and make diagnoses. They also treat minor injuries, by suturing, splinting, and casting. PAs record progress notes, instruct and counsel patients, and order or carry out therapy. In 48 States and the District of Columbia, physician assistants may prescribe medications. PAs also may have managerial duties. Some order medical supplies or equipment and supervise technicians and assis-

tants.

Physician assistants work under the supervision of a physician. However, PAs may be the principal care providers in rural or inner city clinics, where a physician is present for only 1 or 2 days each week. In such cases, the PA confers with the supervising physician and other medical professionals as needed and as required by law. PAs also may make house calls or go to hospitals and nursing care facilities to check on patients, after which they report back to the physician.

The duties of physician assistants are determined by the supervising physician and by State law. Aspiring PAs should investigate the laws and regulations in the States in which they wish to practice.

Many PAs work in primary care specialties, such as general internal medicine, pediatrics, and family medicine. Other specialty areas include general and thoracic surgery, emergency medicine, orthopedics, and geriatrics. PAs specializing in surgery provide preoperative and postoperative care and may work as first or second assistants during major surgery.

- Physician assistant programs usually last at least 2 years; admission requirements vary by program, but many require at least 2 years of college and some health care experience.
- All States require physician assistants to complete an accredited education program and to pass a national exam in order to obtain a license.
- Physician assistants rank among the fastest growing occupations, as physicians and health care institutions increasingly utilize physician assistants in order to contain costs.
- Job opportunities should be good, particularly in rural and inner city clinics.

In Kansas, PA programs are two years in length and require anywhere from two years to four years of pre-PA college courses for admission. Upon graduation from an accredited PA program (Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs), the PA must take a national certification exam (National Commission on Certification of PAs / National Board of Medical Examiners).

College science courses that should be taken before entering a Physician Assistant training program generally include: General Chemistry 1 and 2, Biology 1 and 2, Microbiology, Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, College Algebra, Pharmacology, Pathophysiology, Immunology and Medical Terminology. The only school in Kansas with a PA program is The Wichita State University Department of Physician Assistant.

I didn't have a college education and after talking to Doc about the PA program, he suggested that I get the Paramedic training. He said there were a couple of reasons for his suggestion, but primarily because once I became a Paramedic, I'd have many of the pre-requisite courses out of the way. The PA Program took 3 years of intensive study and he considered this the most productive direction for me to take.

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Looking back now, I'm out of Paramedic School and passed the National Exam, Doc was right. The program had been a killer and more than once I wondered what I had gotten myself into. I missed the kids' senior year while I was off getting that education. It had been a blessing in disguise; I didn't have a lot of time to think about my loss. Marilyn and Rachel pitched in and helped Jim and Mary get through their senior year and ready for the weddings. I got back about 2 weeks before the wedding.

"We missed you, June, how did school go?" Marilyn asked.

"It was tough, but I managed. The two of you don't know how much I appreciate all that you did, getting the kids through their senior year and preparing for the weddings. I've just got to see Don and Sandy's daughter; I'll bet she's cute."

"Just do yourself a favor June, don't count the number of months between the weddings and when Mary has her first baby."

"I think that's been going on a while," I responded.

"Probably, but can you blame her, considering all that she's been through?"

"It's none of my business, Rachel. It was her decision to make and I'll just respect it. I'd rather she waited, but that doesn't make any difference now, does it?"

"What was it like going back to school at your age?"

"I think most of those kids looked at me like I was a surrogate mother. One of the guys was a little older, in his 30's, and he hit on me."

"What did you do?"

"I told him to keep it in his pants, he couldn't handle it."

That got a laugh. I didn't tell them that he was very attractive, for a kid, and if I hadn't had to work so hard in school, I might have taken him up on it. But, at the time, sex was the furthest thing from my mind. I was down to a size 4, not bad for a woman in her lower 50s.

"Oh, mom, look at you, when was the last time you ate?"

"I eat, but not to excess, not that I had a lot of weight to lose. Is everything ready for the weddings?"

"I suppose you heard."

"That was your decision Mary; it may have been better if you had waited, but I'll not criticize. Just make sure you get a good pre-natal program set up with Doc."

"Why didn't Randy and you have kids?"

"We tried. I ended up with a partial in 1987. Randy and I were born in '62. We met in the Army and got married in '83. What else don't you know about what went on around here? Marilyn used to teach school in Lakin. Paul and Mike were both Marines. Paul and Marilyn were and are our best friends. We sort of formed a trio when Ray and Susan got together. We got into preparedness before the H5N1 turned Pandemic. That's when Randy switched from the idea of having a basement shelter to that culvert shelter. You know we all weathered the war in the shelter and after, we got the idea to provide a home for a couple of kids who might have lost their parents to the Pandemic. The rest of it, you know."

"You're not too terribly disappointed in me, I hope."

"No, no, I envy you a little, but I didn't say that."

"What now?"

"For me? I think I'll pick up a year of practical experience and then reconsider the PA program."

"What about the farm?"

"Jason is managing it and I expect that Jim and John will work with him to keep the farming going. As far as the garden goes, I see the greenhouse is full of starts that should be planted soon. You can either put in a large garden like we used to or just follow last year's example."

"Jim and I decided to follow last year's example. He converted the wheat, barley, oats and corn into bourbon and horse feed with Jason's help. Jason told him that the oldest stuff should be ready to bottle in a year. He lined up a source of bottles and caps but said since its illegal booze, he doesn't think it should be labeled."

"What did Jason compare it to?"

"There was an open bottle of Maker's Mark."

"Randy said it would be pretty close to the real thing. Did they have any trouble?"

"No, the recipe was written down."

Just what the kids' would need, the BATF on their backs; however, feds tended to stay away from Kearny County during the past year. Not only was the bourbon illegal, but

because Randy was dead, so were the sound suppressors. I fired up Randy's computer and printed myself a certificate; and then, I went to see the Acting Sheriff.

"I thought you should have this for your records, Sheriff."

"What is it, Mrs. Webster?"

"My certificate of training qualifying me to be a Reserve Deputy Sheriff."

"We don't have any female Reserve Deputies; maybe it's time we start. Raise your right hand and repeat after me..."

As Randy would have said: *and that's how I became a Reserve Deputy Sheriff in Kearney County, Kansas.* The Sheriff had the Chief Deputy take me to the Range and I had to qualify with a handgun, shotgun and rifle. I think Randy was there, watching over my shoulder, like a guardian angel, I passed. When I showed my new badge to Marilyn and Rachel, guess what? They headed to the range to practice and told me to fire up that printer.

I fudged the dates and put the same dates on their certificates that Randy had put on Mike and Paul's. I had taken my guns with me when I'd gone to school and when I'd gotten too frustrated with school, spent time on the range, shooting at a picture of the guy who had killed Randy. I had the failure to stop drill down perfect. What was it Jim had said, *Revenge is a dish best served cold?* I bought myself one of those Springfield Armory XD .45s while I was at school. Honey, let me tell you something, I'm one girl you don't want to mess with. I can shoot you in the heart or right between the eyes and if I'm out of bullets, I'll just cut your heart out. Think of an actress in her nastiest role, Sharon Stone times 10, or Demi Moore times 20.

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Saturday, June 14, 2014...

The wedding had been lovely and we were having the reception at the Methodist Church. In the 2 weeks since I'd gotten back, I'd put in our garden and the people from town had bought all of the plant starts that were left over after Rachel and Marilyn had their pick. I'd gotten a job in Lakin as a Paramedic working nights. The company had objected to my carrying the XD and I'd gone to concealed carry and when you're a size 4, that's easier said than done. Fortunately, the uniforms were a little big, I made it work.

One thing Randy always told me that holding grudge and getting revenge hurt you more than the other guy. In this case, the other guy was dead and my focus was more on the system than the man. The government, under the new President, took a new approach, they bought instead of took and offered premium prices. It wasn't like a big city, if we got one call a night, we were busy. I needed the time, to grieve and to consider what I could do to balance the scale.

Rachel and Marilyn finally thought they were ready and approached the Acting Sheriff about becoming Reserve Deputies. That was the last full week of June and by this time he knew who most of the folks in Kearny County were. When they passed their range qualifications, they were sworn in too. That was the keystone, clearing the way for us to keep our less than legal aka LEO and military only firearms. Besides the suppressors, there were the A4s. Marilyn and Rachel preferred the guys' USP Tactical's, with the suppressors, but I was really beginning to like the XD. Since the magazines weren't interchangeable, when we went anywhere in a group, I followed suit, carrying Randy's gun.

When I got on the scale at Doc William's; it registered 107 pounds and I'm only 5'5. He drew blood, concerned that I might be anemic. That was followed by several questions, how was I feeling, had I intentionally lost weight, was I having sleep related problems, the whole depression litany. I told him I was fine, but had literally worked myself to the bone getting through Paramedic school, to which he replied, *Imagine something 3 times worse*. He also told me he planned to retire in *a couple of years*. I couldn't tell if he was encouraging me or suggesting I give up the idea of becoming a PA. He'd aged about 10-12 years since 2008. My body mass index was 17.8 meaning I was slightly underweight.

When you spend 30 years of your life with a man, you adopt his thinking, to an extent. Men are so transparent, at least Randy was. I could read Paul pretty well too. For a man who had been a Force Recon Marine, he had a pretty short fuse. Mike was very private, him I didn't really know. Marilyn was probably a little brash while Rachel was quiet and more reserved, putting me somewhere in the middle. I was relatively sure Rachel wouldn't remarry; she had her 4 grandchildren that she shared with Marilyn. I thought that Marilyn probably would, when she found another Marine.

I did learn that my sister in Kansas City was gone, taken out in the attack. I'd long suspected that, I hadn't heard from her since and that was very unlike her. Just after Independence Day, Jason, Ray, Don, John and Jim headed to Bird City to talk with McGilvray. According to Jason, he didn't know about Mike, Paul and Randy and sent his condolences. He also told them he was retiring and they could buy him out, lock, stock and barrel.

"Mom, we couldn't pass it up. He had tack, wagons, a good stallion standing stud and several breeding mares."

"We needed more horses, Jim, you did very well. How are you dividing the horses and equipment up?"

"I'm keeping the stallion for us and we'll divide the mares up. Ray has the other stallion; the one they originally bought from him. We now have a chuck wagon; I figured we could pull it in parades."

"What did you plant this year?"

"We divided the fields the same as before, one-fourth in soybeans, one-fourth in barley, one-fourth in corn and the remaining quarter in grasses, wheat, oats, alfalfa and timothy. The soil has vigor, you know, we have more manure."

"How are Julia and you getting along?"

"Oh great, she suggested we wait a year to start a family. I like the idea; it will give us time to get to know each other better. Being married isn't the same as dating."

One of the lessons we all have to learn. Waiting a year to start a family probably wasn't a bad idea. I just smiled and gave him a hug.

"It sounds like you have a handle on it. Scoot, you have plenty of work to do and Julia is probably wondering what is taking you so long in Bird City."

The garden was weeded; I did it to burn off some excess energy. After I cleaned up, I tried on the red dress I'd worn to the funeral. It was too big, and I didn't want to get it altered. I'd lost weight evenly and needed new clothes so I decided to go shopping and treat myself to a new wardrobe from the skin out. The choices were better in Garden City and I called Marilyn and Rachel to see if they wanted to go. I'd also keep an eye open for maternity clothes for Mary. Rachel said she wanted to finish weeding, but Marilyn was ready to go, she only needed 30 minutes.

"You ready?"

"Hey kiddo, I tried that red dress on and it just hangs. I decided to treat myself and get everything the right size."

"What are you down to?"

"107."

"You should eat."

"I do. If I had wanted to lose weight, I probably have ballooned up to 130. It's a shame they don't have a Victoria's Secrets store in Garden City, I need everything."

"Victoria's Secrets? What's gotten into you?"

"We'll go to Maurice's, Buckle's is mostly casual."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 2

"I know a couple of shops where you might get what you want."

We didn't leave until the stores closed. I was going for a new look, with the proper clothes I might be able to take off a few years. I found what I wanted in the Misses sections. I didn't take that much off, maybe I needed a new hair style and to get my nails done. Nothing to elaborate, it had to be an easy to care for style and I didn't dare do too much with my nails. I got a Dorothy Hamill cut aka The Wedge and my nails were short acrylics.

"Well, look at you," Marilyn said, perhaps a little cattily.

"What do you think?"

"You don't look a day over 48."

"I went back to Garden City and shopped Buckles. They had a good selection of jeans, but then so did Maurice's. Will I do?"

"Looking for a man?"

"Not at all."

"Honey, they'll find you."

They'd find me all right and to them I'd always be the Widow Webster. It was more about feeling good about me. Some of the men might think the new look meant I was easy or looking but they were in for a rude awakening. I went home, saddled a horse, strapped on the revolver and slid the Winchester into the scabbard. I'd ride the stallion today; he hadn't been ridden for a while and was full of spirit. He took off at a full gallop and I just let him run.

"Jason. Are you near the radio?"

"What do you need Ms. Webster?"

"You have a section of fence down here on the south side you need to look at."

"Yes ma'am, I'll check it out."

"Thank you, June clear."

I stopped by the double wide and visited Julia.

"Out for a ride?"

"The stallion hadn't been ridden much and I needed to feel the wind blowing through my hair."

"I like that, what is it called?"

"The Wedge. A woman named Dorothy Hamill skated for the US in the Olympics in Innsbruck, Austria in 1976. She had an unusual hairstyle that became very popular for a while."

"New clothes?"

"Everything just hung on me."

"Coffee?"

"Do you have any tea?"

"Lipton?"

"That will be fine, thank you. Jim said that the two of you had decided to wait to start a family."

"Are you in a hurry to have grandchildren?"

"Not particularly. Beside, Mary's expecting. You're only 18; there is plenty of time for you to have kids."

"I wish my mother felt the same way."

"Giving you a hard time?"

"A little. Are you planning on getting remarried?"

"Why would you ask that?"

"The new look."

"It's as much a morale booster as anything, Julia. I'm working nights and don't get out much. I think I've gone from grieving to acceptance. There are 2 different definitions of the stages of Grief. The 5 stages of Grief are: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance. The other definition has 3 stages: Numbness, Disorganization and Reorganization. One never forgets the person they grieve for. Our feelings may be tempered more with good memories than sadness as time passes, but that isn't to say that waves of raw emotion won't overcome us way after we think we should be done."

"Jim said he's almost afraid to love someone."

"He's been through more than most for an 18 year-old young man. I didn't get the impression that he was having any severe adjustment problems. Your love is different now, Julia, give it time to grow. He'll come around and if he doesn't, let me know and I'll talk to him."

"He's seen so much."

"He'll see more, dying is the inevitable end of life. The older you become, the more of it you see. The hardest thing of all, I think, is for a parent to lose a child."

We visited a while and I headed back to the house, it was getting late. On the way home, for no particular reason, I got to thinking about a lecture from school. "One of the most dangerous drugs there is, is readily available over the counter in pure form and is often an ingredient in several preparations. I'm referring to acetaminophen (APAP). The maximum recommended daily dose is 4 grams, 8 Tylenol Extra-strength. Acetaminophen is rapidly absorbed in therapeutic doses, with peak levels in 1-2 hours and 2-4 hours in the overdose setting. Therapeutic levels range from 10-20 mcg/mL. Small protein binding of 10% occurs, with a volume of distribution of 0.9 L/kg.

"Metabolism is primarily hepatic; the half-life is 2-4 hours. Acetaminophen, the parent compound, is nontoxic, but hepatic metabolism leads to formation of a toxic metabolite, N-acetyl-benzoquinoneimine (NAPQI). The liver metabolizes more than 90% of acetaminophen to glucuronide and sulfate conjugates, which are eliminated in the urine. In children, sulfation is the primary pathway until age 10-12 years; glucuronidation predominates in adolescents and adults. Only a small amount of acetaminophen (2%) is excreted unchanged by the kidney. Hepatotoxicity is the result of formation of the reactive and toxic metabolite NAPQI by the cytochrome P-450 system.

"Glutathione can bind NAPQI and lead to excretion of nontoxic mercapturate conjugates. As glutathione stores are diminished, NAPQI is not detoxified and covalently binds to the lipid bilayer of hepatocytes causing centrilobular necrosis. Glutathione must be replaced by sulfhydryl compounds from the diet or medication such as NAC. Glutathione stores are affected by age, diet, liver disease, and medical conditions such as fasting, gastroenteritis, chronic alcoholism, or HIV disease. Inducers of cytochrome P-450 2E1 such as ethanol, isoniazid (INH), rifampin, phenytoin, barbiturates, and carbamazepine can lead to increased production of NAPQI.

"Acetaminophen is the drug most commonly ingested in overdoses and is a common co-ingestant. Acetaminophen-induced hepatic failure is the second leading cause of liver transplantation. N-acetylcysteine (NAC) is the active ingredient in a formulation known as Mucomyst, an oral agent given to counteract liver damage in cases of acetaminophen overdose.

"A typical history of acetaminophen overdose is:

"Phase 1

- The first phase lasts up to 24 hours.
- Patients typically experience anorexia, nausea, and vomiting.
- Some patients may have no initial symptoms, but they have the potential to develop significant clinical toxicity.
- The presence of neurologic, respiratory, and cardiac symptoms is rare in this phase.

"Phase 2

- The second phase typically occurs 24-48 hours postingestion.
- Patients present with right upper quadrant pain and tenderness that coincides with transaminase elevation.

"Phase 3

- Phase 3 develops 3-4 days postingestion.
- Patients have symptoms of hepatic failure with jaundice, bleeding, or encephalopathy.
- Only about 3.5% of patients who develop hepatotoxicity eventually develop fulminant hepatic failure.
- Death may occur due to cerebral edema or sepsis.

"Phase 4

- Phase 4 occurs 4-14 days postingestion.
- Depending on the extent of damage, patients may have complete recovery of liver function or death.

"As is the case in any type of drug poisoning, detailed drug history taking is essential for adequate evaluation in suspected acetaminophen overdose. The history should include the dosage, route of administration, duration of therapy, and names of other medications ingested concomitantly.

"Laboratory testing must include serial measurements of acetaminophen levels. In patients with concentrations of more than 300 mg/L 4 hours after ingestion and more than 50 mg/L 15 hours after ingestion, the probability of resultant severe or fatal liver damage is 90%.

"Risk of hepatotoxicity may be further estimated using the Rumack-Matthew nomogram, which relates plasma acetaminophen concentration to the time since ingestion. The nomogram is intended for use in patients with no concomitant risk factors for hepatotoxicity and assumes a single-dose ingestion and a known time of ingestion. If these conditions are not met, the nomogram is not accurate enough to be useful. Additionally, liver toxicity cannot be predicted from serum levels determined earlier than 4 hours after ingestion.

"Whether further absorption of acetaminophen can be decreased or prevented depends on how much time has passed since ingestion, a finding that may not be easy to ascertain through history taking. Because of the rapid absorption of acetaminophen, syrup of

ipeccac and gastric lavage are rarely indicated. In addition, their use may further irritate the gastrointestinal tract, making oral antidote administration difficult. Hemodialysis may remove 10% of the ingested dose but has not been shown to add any clinical benefit. Activated charcoal should be administered to bind acetaminophen in the stomach.

"The mainstay of therapy for acetaminophen poisoning is administration of acetylcysteine (Mucomyst, Mucosil). This antidote replenishes glutathione in the liver, allowing the toxic metabolite N-acetyl-p-benzoquinoneimine (NAPQI) to be broken down to a nontoxic substance. Acetylcysteine appears to work by several mechanisms. It helps prevent binding of NAPQI to hepatocytes and enhances synthesis of additional glutathione and sulfate. Acting intracellularly as a glutathione substitute, acetylcysteine binds directly to NAPQI and also enhances reduction of NAPQI.

"Acetylcysteine has been in use since the 1970s, and the oral-solution form received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration in 1985. It should be given if the serum level of acetaminophen was not measured within 8 hours after ingestion. Acetylcysteine is proven effective in prevention and treatment of hepatotoxicity up to 24 hours after ingestion if any acetaminophen is detectable in serum or if biochemical evidence of hepatic dysfunction is ongoing. Generally, the threshold for giving acetylcysteine is an acetaminophen level of 200 mg/L 4 hours after ingestion and of 30 mg/L 15 hours after ingestion.

"The initial dose of oral acetylcysteine (available in 10% and 20% solutions) is 140 mg/kg, followed by 70 mg/kg every 4 hours up to a total of 17 doses. The possibility of charcoal binding to acetylcysteine is a concern because availability of the agent would then be decreased. Therefore, some investigators advocate that a 50% increase in the dosage of acetylcysteine may be warranted if activated charcoal was administered.

"The odor of acetylcysteine has been described as resembling that of rotten eggs, but the oral solution may be made more palatable by diluting it to 5% with soda or juice. Other methods to ease administration include diluting the solution even more, changing the diluent, chilling the solution, sipping slowly, using a straw, and drinking from a covered container. If vomiting occurs within an hour of administration, the dose should be repeated. Metoclopramide may be given intravenously for marked vomiting, because only a small amount of the agent is metabolized by the liver.

"Although only the oral use of acetylcysteine is approved in the United States, an intravenous form has been used in Europe and Canada for several years. The benefits of intravenous use are ease of administration and reduced nausea and vomiting; however, there is a 10% chance of allergic reaction due to the pyrogens in the formulation. Some experts advocate that an institutionally approved protocol for intravenous administration be created for use in patients with severe acetaminophen poisoning who cannot tolerate the oral form of the drug. This protocol should include recommended indications and procedures, informed consent information, and details of administration.

"For intravenous administration of acetylcysteine, 150 mg/kg in 200 mL of 5% dextrose

is given over a 15-minute period. (The same formulations as used orally are used intravenously.) In patients at high risk of hepatotoxicity, a second intravenous dose of 50 mg/kg should be given 4 hours after the initial dose. The total dose given intravenously over 24 hours should not exceed 300 mg/kg.

"Patients who experience complications and fulminant hepatic failure need supportive care. Those in whom severe liver damage (alanine aminotransferase level >1,000 IU/L) develops have a 5% to 25% mortality rate. Additional indicators of a poor outcome include arterial blood gas pH of less than 7.3, grade III encephalopathy (characterized by marked confusion, incoherent speech, asterixis, and abnormal findings on electroencephalography), serum creatinine level of more than 3.9 mg/dL, and PT exceeding 100 seconds. Liver transplantation should be considered in patients with fulminant hepatic failure. Candidates for transplantation include those with advanced encephalopathy, renal failure, and coagulopathy."

You can see why school was difficult, that was only one small lecture out of many. The instructor gave us references to his sources, one was Jeffrey Tucker, MD and the others was Anup Dev T. Salgia, DO and Shawn David Kosnik, DO (Vol 105 / No 4 / April 1999 / Postgraduate Medicine).

I was home; it was quite the lecture on the dangers and treatment of Tylenol overdose, whether accidental or intentional. Before the war, we saw more cases of intentional overdose, but after, most of the cases seemed to be accidental. From my experience in the hospital, use of oral NAC generally induced vomiting with the patient bringing forth large volumes of what had the appearance of coffee grounds. It was the partially digested acetaminophen. It was best to give the patient a container to hold the vomit before you gave them the glass of Mucomyst.

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I didn't feel like eating much; I open a can of soup, a special treat – Wolfgang Puck's Old Fashioned Beef-Barley. That and a slice of homemade bread made the meal and I had the rest of a jar of home canned peaches. I tended to munch on fresh veggies if I got hungry and they were available. Marilyn had said I didn't look a day over 48. To be honest, I'd hoped for more, 46 or maybe even 44. She was being catty and if I really wanted to know, I'd have to get the appraisal of a man, like my partner on the nightshift. Ron was 45 and married but tended to look the ladies over. Leer, pretty much described his look if the lady was particularly attractive. As was Randy's occasional bent, I'll define the term: To look with a sidelong glance, indicative especially of sexual desire or sly and malicious intent. If he gave me, *the look* I'd know what I wanted to know and also shut him down, quickly.

Ron reminded me of Don Knotts, remember him? Barney Fife and later on Matlock, Les Calhoun. The late Andy Griffith was best known for his starring roles in two very popular TV series, The Andy Griffith Show and Matlock. He had Don Knotts in both of those, they were friends, I think. In any event, you could probably understand why I would shut

Ron down in a heartbeat, not my type. Randy had looked rather like Harrison Ford or close anyway.

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One of the other drugs we studied was Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), the date rape drug. Flunitrazepam is known to induce anterograde amnesia in sufficient doses; individuals are unable to remember certain events that they experienced while under the influence of the drug. This effect is particularly dangerous when flunitrazepam is used to aid in the commission of sexual assault; victims may not be able to clearly recall the assault, the assailant, or the events surrounding the assault. Flunitrazepam is considered to be one of the most addictive of the benzodiazepines, along with clonazepam (Klonopin), midazolam (Versed, Hypnovel, Dormicum), temazepam (Restoril, Normison), lorazepam (Ativan, Temesta, Tavor) and alprazolam (Xanax).

It is difficult to estimate just how many flunitrazepam-facilitated rapes have occurred in the United States. Very often, biological samples are taken from the victim at a time when the effects of the drug have already passed and only residual amounts remain in the body fluids. These residual amounts are difficult, and sometimes impossible, to detect using standard screening assays available in the United States. If flunitrazepam exposure is to be detected at all, urine samples need to be collected within 72 hours and subjected to sensitive analytical tests. The problem is compounded by the onset of amnesia after ingestion of the drug, which causes the victim to be uncertain about the facts surrounding the rape. This uncertainty may lead to critical delays or even reluctance to report the rape and provide appropriate biological samples for testing. If a person suspects that he or she is the victim of a flunitrazepam-facilitated rape, he or she should get laboratory testing for flunitrazepam as soon as possible.

Scopolamine is used criminally as a date rape drug and as an aid to robbery, the most common act being the clandestine drugging of a victim's drink. It is preferred because it induces retrograde amnesia, or an inability to recall events prior to its administration. Victims of this crime are often admitted to a hospital in police custody, under the assumption that the patient is experiencing a psychotic episode. A telltale sign is a fever accompanied by a lack of sweat. The drug is sometimes used to treat motion sickness and is available as a transdermal patch called Transderm Scop (transdermal scopolamine). The patch is programmed to deliver approximately 1mg of scopolamine over 3 days.

Technically speaking, any substance that renders you incapable of saying no or asserting yourself and your needs can be used to commit rape. This can include things like alcohol, marijuana or other street drugs, designer or club drugs like ecstasy, over-the-counter sleeping pills and antihistamines, even cold medications. However, the term "date rape drug" usually applies to the drugs flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), Gamma Hydrox Butyrate (GHB aka G, Juice, Liquid X, Liquid E, Gamma-oh, Georgia Homeboy, Georgia Detwiler, Georgia Hillbilly, Blue Verve, Gamma-G, Qi, scoop, goop or gerb) and Ketamine HCL (Ketanest, Ketase, Ketalar aka Kitty, K, Ket, Special K, Vitamin K or

Bumps).

In the United Kingdom, the use of flunitrazepam and other "date rape" drugs is becoming widespread as a means of sedating victims and stealing from them. It is estimated that up to 2000 men and women are robbed each year after being spiked with powerful sedatives, making drug-assisted robbery a more common problem than drug-assisted rape.

A number of people are expressing fears that some benzodiazepine withdrawal symptoms last forever, and that they can never completely recover. Particular concerns have been raised about impairment of cognitive functions (such as memory and reasoning) and other lingering problems such as muscle pains and gastrointestinal disturbances.

People with such worries can be reassured. All the evidence shows that a steady decline in symptoms almost invariably continues after withdrawal, though it can take a long time – **even several years in some cases**. Most people experience a definite improvement over time so that symptoms gradually decrease to levels nowhere near as intense as in the early days of withdrawal, and eventually almost entirely disappear. All the studies show steady, if slow, improvement in cognitive ability and physical symptoms.

Although most studies have not extended beyond a year after withdrawal, the results suggest that improvement continues beyond this time. There is absolutely no evidence that benzodiazepines cause permanent damage to the brain, nervous system or body. (I sure hope that the listed benzodiazepines are in descending order with respect to addictivity. My experience with Xanax suggests otherwise. They ought to call that stuff Gotcha.)

◦

In addition to getting a new wardrobe, I had my uniforms tailored. The next shift I showed up for, Ron's jaw was on the ground.

"Forget it Tiger, Jan would kill you."

"Uh, uh, uh, sure, nice haircut, Dorothy Hamill?"

My weapon was in the BOB, which was just like an AMEX Card; I never left home without it. It doubled as my purse by simply adding my wallet and badge case. I had time to build BOBs for John and Julia, too and told Mary and Jim to find an appropriate firearm to add. The key, I felt was that Speer Gold Dot 124gr +P JHP ammo, that some called flying ashcans.

Aside from the rather obvious physiological differences between men and women, that don't require explanation, men and women think differently. I didn't say one gender was smarter than the other, just that they have divergent thought processes. For one thing,

they seem to use opposite sides of their brains in certain thought processes. What may seem perfectly obvious to a woman may completely escape a man and vice versa. Women mature mentally more quickly than men, or so experience seems to show. While the female may be emotionally driven, men generally aren't and thus appear to be insensitive.

That being said, couples who spend much of their lives together generally know what their spouse would do in any given situation, generally wives more often than their husbands. The women who suddenly found themselves widows and walk away from their former life, or in this case, continue to carry out the course their husbands envisioned. And all of the foregoing statements are generalizations.

o

The night shift at the hospital, that's where we're based, is generally quiet. Kearny County's population, being small, meant we didn't get many calls. If being a Paramedic hadn't been so much a cause, rather than a job, I couldn't have lived on the wages they paid. Jan was a nurse at the hospital and worked the same hours Ron did. She'd stop by and visit when she caught a break.

"Um, new look, Dorothy Hamill. I suppose Ron has a bruise on his jaw."

"I told him you'd kill him, Jan."

"Why didn't you go to work in Garden City, June, they pay better."

"I'm only doing this for the experience."

"Other than the occasional car accident or heart attack, you won't get much here."

"I was giving some thought to go back to school and become a PA."

"Doc says he's retiring."

"He told me when I had my last checkup."

"I'd have checked you for anemia and depression, you've lost weight."

"He did. I just burned it off at school; it was harder than I thought it would be."

"If you had a hard time learning to be a Paramedic, you really be challenged studying to become a PA."

"That's more or less what Doc said, Jan. I haven't decided; I still get flashbacks to the day that Randy was killed. They were called up just as we were sitting down to Sunday dinner."

"That was so sad. I guess Susan is just lucky Ray didn't get killed too."

"He calls that wound his weather predictor."

"I was in the ER that day; it was a clean through and through. It's funny, I would have thought that some of those FEMA people would have been wounded and not killed."

"Some of them might have been, but I rather suspect the Geneva Convention didn't apply that day. We had a big party just a few days before on Independence Day and most of those National Guard troops attended. Mike had 2 barrels of home brewed beer and we did a side of beef on a spit. They kept bringing Mike, Paul and Randy glasses of beer to thank them for the great meal and I'm afraid they got drunk," I explained with a shutter, remembering.

"Care to share our lunch, there's more than enough?"

"I brought my rabbit food; I don't want to gain the weight back, not with a new wardrobe. Thanks."

Ron was a fool, Jan was a very nice woman and attractive to boot. Apparently he didn't know the facts about grass. That said; Ron was more of a letch than the type of man who would follow through. You'd think a Paramedic with several years' experience had seen enough that a woman's body wasn't a subject of fascination. Think Barney Fife with that single bullet, in his pocket. Barney was all mouth, so was Ron.

o

"We repaired that fence, ma'am. Nice bunch of Clydesdales now. I'm thinking that we won't breed our mares and make more use of them in the fields next year."

"Whatever you say, Jason. How are Jim and John working out?"

"Randy taught Jim well and John doesn't need much seasoning. I think come winter, we ought to bottle that first batch of bourbon, I'll have to check, but I think it will be ready."

"Mary told me. It just doesn't seem right, putting our bourbon without a label on the bottle. I'll have to think of something generic that say's what's in the bottle."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 3

The garden did very well; it was warmer this year, more like the nuclear summer we'd had. The boys said that the fields produced bumper crops. It felt more like the Sonoran desert. The US has 4 deserts, Chihuahuan, Great Basin, Mojave and the Sonoran. They're arid, less than 14" of annual rainfall and hot in the summer. It was a sharp departure from our usual semiarid steppe climate. The High Plains are a subregion of the Great Plains in the central US, located in eastern Colorado, western Kansas, western Nebraska, central and eastern Montana, eastern New México, western Oklahoma, western Texas, and southeastern Wyoming. In some definitions of the subregion, parts of western South Dakota and North Dakota are included. From east to west, the High Plains rise in elevation from around 750 m (2500 ft) to over 1800 m (6000 ft).

The movie *High Plains Drifter* wasn't filmed on the High Plains, but rather on the shores of Mono Lake in California. You may know the place by another name, the Long Valley Caldera. Randy's HDD must have contained 10,000 files and it was as informative as going on the internet. Back to the crops, it was dry and we ended up irrigating. We'd had almost no snow last winter, and the Arkansas River was dry again. Randy had to irrigate back in 2010.

o

I worked on the computer for a while and eventually designed a label that I could print on the Avery 3"x4" labels that came 6 to the sheet. I decided that the label would contain the following information: Proprietor's Reserve Bourbon, 100 proof, plus the year it was bottled. I can tell you now, what we ended up with: 225 gallons = 852 liters = 1,136 750ml bottles = 94 $\frac{2}{3}$ cases. I'm not much of a bourbon drinker, but it was smooth. Randy would have been ecstatic.

Like Randy, I rarely drank. A rare glass of wine, I favored the Merlot, or an occasional cocktail, usually an old fashioned. When you think of cocktails, it is often the Martini that first comes to mind. While it might be one of the more simplistic drinks in the cocktail category, for many the term Martini has become synonymous with, if not outright replace, the label of "Cocktail" when talking about this style of mixed drink. An older cocktail than the Martini, is the Manhattan. It is similar in basic form as the Martini, but its ingredients are often considered to be more complex and robust in flavor, and so to many cocktailians it provides a much better representation of this category. Only a few other cocktails that have survived to modern day that comes from the era of the Martini and the Manhattan. There is one cocktail of similar lineage, but holds nowhere near the same level of respect and esteem as either the Martini or the Manhattan. This cocktail is the Old Fashioned. But instead of being held in any sort of awe, the Old Fashioned is often seen as just one of those old slop drinks that isn't worth the time it takes to make it. And to taste it the way many modern bartenders serve it, it's no surprise.

The original recipe for an Old Fashioned is: Dissolve a small lump of sugar with a little water in a whiskey-glass; add two dashes Angostura bitters, a small piece ice, a piece

lemon-peel, one jigger whiskey. Mix with small bar-spoon and serve, leaving spoon in glass.

Nobody makes them that way anymore. Can you imagine a bartender serving you a drink with the spoon still in the glass? They remove the spoon, add a cherry and a slice of orange and often top the glass off with soda. It was probably originally a man's drink, but a Lady can like them too.

◦

Some guy suggested that writing from A Woman's Perspective was easy:

- 1) Throw logic out the window
- 2) Turn off half your brain
- 3) Everything has an emotional component
- 4) Men are always at fault
- 5) See Rule #4

That's about what I'd expect, from a man, although there may be some merit in rule #5.

◦

Was I starting a whole new life or continuing with the one I had? Some of both, I suppose, it seemed to change from moment to moment. In the fall, I transferred to Garden City. Lakin provide little experience and Garden City had a population in excess of 25,000, hence more calls. I also switched to working days and nights, according to their rotating schedule. Heck of a commute, a little over 30 miles one-way; I drove my car, there was an ample supply of E85, now. Jim was using Randy's pickup around the farm and this made more sense.

I think we were having what they call an *Indian Summer*, it remained very warm out and slightly hazy. The term *Indian Summer* is generally associated with a period of considerably above normal temperatures, accompanied by dry and hazy conditions ushered in on a south or southwesterly breeze. Several references make note of the fact that a true *Indian Summer* cannot occur until there has been a killing frost/freeze. Since frost and freezing temperatures generally work their way south through the fall, this would give credence to the possibility of several Indian Summers occurring in a fall, especially across the northern areas where frost/freezes usually come early.

In any event, there are several theories or possibilities of the explanation and origin of the term *Indian Summer*, yet no one theory has actually been proven. Given the fact it has been centuries since the term first appeared, it will probably rest with its originators. All in all, even with the variety of opinions on this weather (or seasonal) phenomenon, the most popular belief of *Indian Summer* is as follows...It is an abnormally warm and dry weather period, varying in length, that comes in the autumn time of the year, usually in October or November, and only after the first killing frost/freeze. There may be sever-

al occurrences of *Indian Summer* in a fall season or none at all.

I had a bad spell of depression in early July that started around Independence Day and lasted perhaps 3 weeks. I quickly identified it as a seasonal depression that related to the Massacre and my losing Randy. Typically one doesn't treat a short lived period of depression, unless it deepens. Most anti-depressants take about 3 weeks to kick in and even longer to take full effect. I talked to Doc about it and he told me we'd wait about a month and treat it if it didn't lift. Ironically, he'd just asked me about depression a few weeks earlier.

There are several types of antidepressant medications used to treat depressive disorders. These include newer medications-chieflly the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)-and the tricyclic's and monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs). The SSRIs-and other newer medications that affect neurotransmitters such as dopamine or norepinephrine-generally have fewer side effects than tricyclic's. Each acts on different chemical pathways of the human brain related to moods. Antidepressant medications are not habit-forming. Although some individuals notice improvement in the first couple of weeks, usually antidepressant medications must be taken regularly for at least 4 weeks and, in some cases, as many as 8 weeks, before the full therapeutic effect occurs. To be effective and to prevent a relapse of the depression, medications must be taken for about 6 to 12 months, carefully following the doctor's instructions. Medications must be monitored to ensure the most effective dosage and to minimize side effects. For those who have had several bouts of depression, long-term treatment with medication is the most effective means of preventing recurring episodes.

Of course, then it lifted and I called Doc to let him know. He concluded that the timing of the depression probably reflected the Anniversary, as it were, of Randy's death. He suggested that I remain aware of the possibility of a reoccurrence next year, but since I had started a new life, he expected it would pass with time.

o

When it eventually cooled off, it didn't really get cold; Jason and Jim bottled the bourbon and affixed the Proprietor's Reserve labels. We were afraid that ATF would be pounding on our door as soon as the stuff hit the streets. The way they marketed the stuff was to take a bottle of the bourbon to the various bars in Lakin and Garden City. It was a complementary sample. It noticeably lacked the tax stamps and didn't appear on any of their back bars. Kansas Law says, in relevant part, inventory may only be purchased from a retail liquor store, which has a federal wholesale liquor license or from a licensed distributor. The retail liquor store, which provides the liquor, must be in the same or adjacent county as the club or drinking establishment.

That began our days as wholesalers of illegal liquor. You figure it out, we sold it for \$15 a bottle or \$180 a case and we ended up selling 90 cases. That wouldn't cover the fines, if we were caught. I stopped one night for a drink in Garden City on the way home and asked for an Old Fashioned made with Proprietor's Reserve. The bartender smiled

and dragged out a bottle of Maker's Mark. I assumed that the stuff had been rebottled, an illegal act in itself. A woman, sitting alone, in a bar in Garden City just naturally attracts attention. I passed up several offers from fellas who wanted to buy me a drink. Can't a Lady go into a bar just to have a drink after an especially busy day without attracting unwarranted attention? The lesson was that if I wanted a drink after work, I'd better have it at home; I didn't want to be labeled as a Tart.

It was about that time that I purchased a S&W Chief's Special revolver. It was a model 360P, with the optional Crimson Trace grip, .357MAG/.38+P and blued finish. It was bad enough with the .38 Special, but when I switched to the .357MAG, it took an extremely firm grip. As with any laser aiming device, the Crimson Trace laser grips need to be zeroed and I needed to train properly so that I could manipulate the laser under field conditions. The device was adjustable for both windage and elevation using an Allen wrench. I zeroed my laser aiming device for fifteen yards. That's the median distance for my handgun training and I recognized that the point-of-aim / point-of-impact relationship changed if I was closer or farther away; closer and my shots would hit higher than the laser dot – farther away and the shots hit lower. (adapted)

o

Mary was due in February and both Susan and Karen were expecting, yet again. Stop and think about Karen, her kids ranged in age from teenagers and she was pregnant. Don had pressed the soybeans and everyone was busy converting the oil to biodiesel. It was easier to just sell most of the corn to the ethanol producer in Garden City; he had all of the proper licensing. It didn't take a lot of corn to produce 12 barrels of bourbon or to feed our growing herds of livestock.

I suppose than some might think we were corrupt, what with making Moonshine ala bourbon. It is an American tradition to make your own whiskey. You can lay the blame for the current state of the laws right at the foot of our own Carrie Nation. Prohibition basically started in Kansas. She went through Medicine Lodge over in Benton County like a whirlwind. Alone or accompanied by hymn-singing women, she would march into a bar and sing and pray, while smashing bar fixtures and stock with a hatchet. I understand that her first husband was a drunk.

Prohibition didn't stop people from drinking; it just helped expand organized crime. Even prominent citizens and politicians later admitted to having used alcohol during Prohibition. President Harding kept the White House well stocked with bootleg liquor, though, as a Senator, he had voted for Prohibition. This discrepancy between legality and actual practice led to widespread disdain for authority. Some Prohibition agents took bribes to overlook the illegal brewing activities of gangsters. Many problems arose. It had been estimated that six million dollars would be needed to enforce prohibition laws. Over time, however, more people drank illegally and money ended up in gangsters' pockets. Gangsters would then bribe officials to ignore their illegal activities. The cost of enforcing prohibition laws thus increased. In some cases, the money likely ended up in corrupt Prohibition agencies.

Prohibition also presented lucrative opportunities for organized crime to take over the importation ("bootlegging"), manufacture, and distribution of alcoholic beverages. Al Capone, one of the most infamous bootleggers of them all, built his criminal empire largely on profits from illegal alcohol. After the repeal of the national constitutional amendment, some states continued to enforce prohibition laws; Oklahoma, Kansas, and Mississippi were still "dry" in 1948. Mississippi, which had made alcohol illegal in 1907, was the last state to repeal prohibition, in 1966. While there are still some dry counties and communities in the United States (mainly in the South), in practice this now means little more than that people wishing to buy alcohol must travel some distance to do so and bars are not allowed in the prohibiting jurisdiction.

o

I thought back remembering all of our early preps, the change from a basement shelter to the culvert, the standby genset, the small wind turbines they went to Denver to get and later that 2mw monster that we had to hire someone to maintain. The expansion of the farm came in stages, it doubled when John Hansen had a heart attack and doubled again when James Jones decided to retire. Randy bought that single premium insurance policy just after that, just in case something happened. The amount was calculated to enable me to pay most, if not all, the money we owed on the property.

Now, we produced biodiesel, replenishing our usage and selling the remainder to Lakin and the County at \$6 a gallon. It was more practical to buy the E85 from the plant in Garden City and we tried to keep not less than half a tank, 500 gallons, on hand at all times. Corn was running over \$3 a bushel now and soybean meal was also up. We charged for the garden plot based on size with a tenth acre running \$75.

We preserved our heirloom seeds and provided spring plants and potato cuttings quite reasonably. It was unconscionable to charge much for the potato eyes, they were collected when we peeled spuds, just keeping a little extra meat. We generally got the flats and small square pots back because we provided garbage cans for people to drop them in. We mixed our own potting soil with a mixture of soil, vermiculite, sand and a little fertilizer. When peat was available we added some of that too.

In addition, we canned, preserved root crops like carrots in sand and the potatoes in 100 pound gunny sacks. Fresh peppers were blanched and frozen and the green beans generally canned along with sliced beets and pickles. As for the pickles, we rotated the recipes from dill to sweet to bread and butter, a different kind every year. Randy had always liked the bread and butter best. I didn't believe in ghosts, still don't, but Randy was there with me, at least in spirit. He'd spent most of his life on that farm. Bourbon is a spirit, but do spirits drink bourbon? Or did the barrels' contents just shrink due to evaporation?

Did I tell you I met a man in Garden City? He reminded me of Don Galloway, Detective Sergeant Ed Brown on Ironside. He'd lost his wife over a year before to breast cancer.

He was about 5'9, brown hair, in reasonable condition for a 55 year old man and had 2 sons who worked for the Garden City PD. He was a retired Command Sergeant Major with 30 years in the Army, retiring in May of 2009, just before the crap hit the fan. He was born and raised in Iowa, but his late wife was from Garden City and when he retired, they settled there. His name? Dan Robbins.

o

Marilyn was hot on the trail of a Marine. She found one but he hadn't been in the Corps since the early '70s. You know what they say, once a Marine, always a Marine. He had been Marine Infantry, not Force Recon, although Force Recon dated to the '50s. The Marine Corps Special Operations Command had been activated back in February of 2006 at Camp Lejeune, NC by then SecDef Donald Rumsfeld. The Corps had always played 3rd fiddle when it came to getting their share of funds for the military. They can't be all bad; they still prefer the M14 rifle and the M1911 pistol.

Rachel, as I had suggested, wasn't looking. In fact, Doc had her on Prozac having diagnosed major depression. She could have surprised us, the quiet ones sometimes do. Not Rachel, aside from the one time she wore the red dress to the funeral, she now wore dark colored clothes, usually black. She wasn't an unattractive woman, but dressing down as she did sent a clear signal.

I met Dan in the Emergency Room at St. Catherine Hospital. He'd badly sprained his wrist and came in to have a doctor check it out. He had a 2nd degree sprain, tearing a few of his ligaments. They had used a splint, in this case. A 2nd degree sprain will usually heal, but it takes some time. Fortunately it wasn't his strong side, but his left wrist. We must have visited for the better part of an hour; he was very polite and excused himself to take 2 of the pain pills the doctor had prescribed.

"How on earth did you manage to sprain your wrist that bad?"

"Moving my table saw, it was a pretty dumb thing. I've moved that saw dozens of times, but this time it started to tip and I reached out to grab it and felt something in my wrist pop."

When I told Dan how Randy had died, he said an unusual thing.

"He was one of those men? They ought to erect a Memorial; I think that sometimes the government forgets its place. The name of this Country is the United States of America, not the State of America. They sometimes act like they forget that their power is derived from the people and not the other way around. Would you care to go out for a drink when you get off?"

"Dan, that would be nice, but you really shouldn't mix liquor with the Tylenol #3. The cocaine and alcohol are symbiotic and you just shouldn't."

"It was just a thought."

"It's going to be difficult for you to prepare dinner, care to join me?"

"I wouldn't want to put you out, June, how about a rain check?"

"You wouldn't be putting me out. I put a roast in the crock pot on low and the meat should be falling apart by the time I get home. It's nothing special, a 7 bone roast, whole potatoes and whole carrots."

"Onion and garlic?"

"One whole onion and a couple of whole cloves of garlic, yes. Interested?"

"Well..."

"I'll tell you what, don't take any more of the Tylenol and I'll treat you to that drink, have you heard of Proprietor's Reserve Bourbon?"

"It's good, but you can't buy it in the store."

"Ok, pick me up at 5. Maybe you shouldn't drink and drive, I have a large house, bring a change of clothes and if it gets late, you can sleep over. I have 2 guest rooms." (No, I wasn't inviting him to sleep with me, not yet anyway, I'd give him a 4 on a scale of 5, at the moment.)

"Ok, I see you at 5."

o

We had a call around 4:30, heart attack, and it was after 5 by the time we got back to the hospital. We filled the doctor in, gave them our report and I went to look for Dan. There he sat, with an AWOL bag, reading a book.

"Hi, sorry I'm late, we had a call."

"I figured, brought a book."

"What are you reading?"

"Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six."

"Good book?"

"It been around a while, I found an old copy and thought I'd re-read it."

"If you're ready, Dan, follow me. I live north of Lakin on a section."

"Lead the way."

o

"So it actually does have its own bottle, I wondered. Where on earth did you find it?"

"I knew the person who made it. He claimed his goal was to create bourbon as good as Maker's Mark."

"It's at least that good. Knew him?"

"Randy made it."

"That's a shame; I was looking forward to being able to get more."

"You will be able to, at least until we get caught. He made 6 barrels the first year and then, 12 barrels a year until he was killed. Our hired hand, Jason, and my foster son, Jim, have continued to follow Randy's recipe and make 12 barrels a year."

"Well, I'll be. I'd never had it in an Old Fashioned; I usually just drink it on the rocks."

"Ok, dinner is on the table, dig in."

"How long have you been a Paramedic?"

"Only since last June, I went back to school after Randy was killed. We both had EMT-1 and EMT-2 training but didn't have the time to get the Paramedic training. He had an insurance policy that paid the farm off and left enough for me to go to school. I thought about Physician's Assistant training, but Doc recommended Paramedic training instead. At my age I don't think I'll invest the time."

"What are you, 45?"

"Thank you!"

"Well, how old are you actually?"

"You should know better than to ask a woman her age. I'm 52."

"Get out of here; I don't know many 52 year old women who look like you."

"Thanks, I work at it, but I dress younger, that's all."

"You had me fooled. This roast is good; you say you did it in a crock pot?"

"How's the wrist?"

"Very sore. I may need a couple of pain pills at bedtime, if it's safe."

"Don't have anything more to drink and you should be ok."

"Can you talk about it? I mean, I'd like to know what happened to your husband."

"I don't really know a lot of the details; you'd have to ask Ray Jenkins, he was one of the 3 survivors. Apparently the Sheriff told those FEMA people to stop what they were doing and the head guy simply shot him. Then it broke out into a firefight with most of the Deputies and Reserves getting killed. That National Guard Company that was based in Garden City came in at the last and finished off the FEMA people."

"I was frankly surprised that some of those FEMA people didn't survive."

"I suspect the order was, *No Quarter*."

"No officer would order that."

"Perhaps not, but none was given."

"That explains the controversy in the media."

"Out of a force of 40, 37 were killed and 3 wounded, Dan. FEMA wasn't giving quarter."

"I'm sorry; I didn't mean to drag up bad memories for you."

"That's all right, it has been about 18 months and I can finally talk about it. Tell me about your wife."

"Her cancer was well along and the doctor wanted to do a radical mastectomy with reconstruction, but she wouldn't allow it. I don't understand, maybe she thought I'd love her less. I just wanted her to live! She knew she was at some risk, her mother died of the same thing, but she put off having the mammogram because they made her so uncomfortable. The previous exam had produced a false positive resulting in an ultrasound and biopsy and that may also explain why she put it off. When she finally agreed, it was too late, it was what the doctor called stage 3A."

"Stage 3A breast cancer is also called locally advanced breast cancer. The tumor is larger than five centimeters and has spread to the lymph nodes under the arm, or a tumor that is any size with cancerous lymph nodes that adhere to one another or surrounding tissue. When breast cancer metastasizes, the majority of women know that it is an illness that's ultimately going to take their life. That may not be in a year or two or three, but it certainly tends to be in less than a decade."

"What does metastasis mean?"

"The cancer cells spread. They can end up anywhere in the body. You got through the flu, the plague and the attack ok?"

"I had a basement shelter built by the guy who had owned the home before. We were able to get the H5N1 vaccine and we didn't go out much. How did you manage to get through?"

"Randy built one of those culvert shelters. He and I were really into preparedness. Right after, he and the other two went looking for draft horses and we now have a large herd of Clydesdales and a large herd of Morgans to ride. He had a very large HDD in his computer and had downloaded thousands of files. Paul and he also went to Denver and bought wind turbines before the war. They were both hams and also had radios."

"I thought I saw a big wind turbine when we drove in."

"You did. It's one of the 2mw turbines that they were going to install at the Sunflower Wind Turbine Farm east of Leoti. Sometime after the war, we had visitors from Leoti. They were farmers who escaped the area after a group took over the town. A force was put together and they went up to Leoti and I suppose you can say that they liberated the town. Later, the folks from Leoti gave us an unassembled tower and generator in gratitude for helping them out."

"You said you had a section?"

"Yes, we started with a quarter section and bought the Hansen place. Later, James Jones retired and we bought his half section. As I said, it's free and clear because Randy had an insurance policy."

"Very fine dinner, thank you. Would you care to show me your shelter?"

"Sure, you get into it from the basement, follow me."

"How big is this thing?"

"It's 10' in diameter and 40' long. We put up ourselves and 2 other families during the fallout period after the war."

"Are those suppressors on those rifles?"

"Yes, but they're legal, I'm a Reserve Deputy with the Kearny County Sheriff's Department."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 4

"A Lady for All Seasons, huh? Paramedic and a Deputy Sheriff."

"Reserve Deputy. 'Not so. Not so, Master Secretary. The maxim is *Qui tacet consentit*: the maxim of the law is *Silence gives consent*. If therefore you wish to construe what my silence betokened, you must construe that I consented, not that I denied."

"Sir Thomas More, I saw the movie."

"Would you care for another taste of the bourbon?"

"Yes, if it's on the rocks."

It was Friday night and we had a couple of drinks. Not too much, you understand, but when Dan went to bed in the Guest Room, he didn't need the Tylenol. I was up bright and early the next day and let him sleep in. It would have been to forward to wake him. I liked this man, from what little I knew of him; a definite 4 and just possibly a 5.

"How do you like your eggs?"

"Over medium."

"Sleep well?"

"I haven't slept that well in a while. I'm surprised, what with my wrist and all."

"How is your wrist?"

"Still very sore."

"Do you ride?"

"I haven't sat a horse in years."

"Then you do?"

"Let's say that I used to."

"Here, eat your breakfast and later I'll show you around the farm."

"Jason, this is June, would you saddle up my stallion and one of the mares? Make it one that's well ridden, please?" I radioed.

"Here strap this on," I said handing Dan Randy's .45 Colt and then the Winchester.
"Take this too; we always carry weapons on the farm when we ride."

"Cowboy guns?"

"Yes, 150 years ago, this was the wild, wild west."

"You'll have to help me strap it on; I only have one hand free."

"Sure."

I told you it was warm out, didn't I? We were in January and it was right around 70°. Cool, but not cold, especially for the middle of winter. You might expect temperatures like this in late March, but not in January. Dan was wearing jeans and a flannel shirt, probably enough, but I asked, "Do you need a jacket?"

"How long do you plan to be gone?"

"Most of the day."

"I'll get one."

"We can use the tie straps to tie it behind the cantle."

"What about the rifle?"

"All of the saddles have scabbards. Most of them are TexTan Ruidoso Ranch Saddles."

"Heavy saddle."

"Big horse. You going to have trouble mounting, I pull the horse over to the mounting block, we all have them."

"Good, this broken wing would make it hard to mount."

Once Dan was in the saddle I tied his jacket behind the cantle and got on the stallion. We made the circuit, check the fence line. Our first stop was at Jim and Julia's.

"Who lives here?"

"My son Jim and his wife Julia."

"Introducing me to the family already?"

"It would have been rude not to have stopped. You already met Jason, our hand."

"Hi mom."

"Jim, I'd like you meet Dan Robbins. I met Dan at the hospital yesterday and because of his injured wrist invited him over for dinner. We had a couple of drinks and I thought maybe he should stay in the guest room rather than drive home."

"Hi. This is my wife Julia."

"I'm very pleased to meet you both."

"Coffee?"

"Sure, but I have to use your bathroom, first," I replied.

(What, the characters in your stories don't have to relieve themselves?)

"Back."

"I'm next," Dan laughed.

"Who is this guy?"

"I told you, I met him yesterday at the hospital. Be nice, I like him."

"Obviously."

"He is a widower and was a Command Sergeant Major in the Army."

"And he spent the night?"

"In the guest bedroom."

I was getting the third degree. But that stopped when Dan returned.

"Mom says you were in the Army. What do you do now?"

"Did you get the third degree while I was in the john?"

"I'm afraid so."

"And you explained that I spent the night in the guest room?"

"I told them twice."

"I don't work, Jim; especially not now that I've sprained my wrist so badly. After I got out of the Army in early 2009, my wife and I barely got moved into the house in the middle

of that pandemic when the thing started to go down with the Chinese. The house we bought had a basement shelter and we stayed there until the fallout cleared. Then we went through her first cancer scare and I spent a lot of time with my wife. There wasn't much work after that and the government got caught up on my pension. I puttered around the house and such for quite a while, unable to find work. She had worked the entire time I was in the Army and we had a fair bit put away and a house paid for."

"She was just about ready to go back to work when she actually got the cancer. I won't bother you with the details, but she died about a year and a half ago. I met your mom yesterday at the hospital and we visited some. I offered to take her out for a drink and instead she invited me home for supper. I was going to say no, but it was roast beef with potatoes, carrots, onions and garlic. We had dinner, toured the shelter, had a couple of more drinks and I turned in, in the guest bedroom. This morning she had breakfast when I got up and asked me to go riding. Your mom is one of the nicest Ladies I've ever met besides my wife. Any more questions?"

"I didn't ask all of that," Jim protested.

"No, but you wanted to know all of it, didn't you?"

"Yes. Did you serve in Iraq?"

"Two tours."

"Did you know my dad?"

"What was the last name?"

"Williams. James Williams."

"Sorry, I never had the pleasure."

"He was killed there."

"I'm very sorry to hear that, we lost over 5,000 very good men and women in Iraq."

"Where were you in Iraq?"

"In what they called the International Zone or Green Zone, near Baghdad; it was bordered on the east by the Tigris River. It was very much a walled in city."

"He was killed in Ramadi."

"Ramadi was a ways from Baghdad, east of Fallujah. Do you know how your father was killed?"

"IED attack."

"Jim, I'm very sorry, many of those were made by Iran. Once they got involved, the insurgency began using what amounted to a shaped charge that the uparmored vehicle couldn't protect against. How did you lose your mother?"

"That damned Bird flu; she didn't take time to get the shots."

"And then you lost your foster father? I've seen my share of dying, but not as a young man. If you ever need anything let me know, I live in Garden City."

"Thank you. But I have Julia now; God and she give me strength."

"I'd say you're in very good hands."

"More coffee?"

"Thanks Julia, but we have to go," I replied.

We made a pit stop before we left; we weren't going to make every stop begin with a potty call.

o

Our next stop was the old Jones farmhouse where John and Mary lived.

"Who lives here?"

"My daughter Mary and her husband, John. Mary and Jim are twins. Don't forget to loosen the cinch."

"Maybe you'd better do it June."

"Sorry, I forgot. Mary is very pregnant and she's due next month, so we won't say long."

"Hi mom."

"Mary, this is my friend Dan Robbins."

"Hello. John, company."

"Mary, John, nice to meet you."

"How long have the two of you been friends, mom?"

"About one day. It's a long story, Mary; I'll fill you in later."

"I saw the two of you riding up, you sit a saddle very well Dan, are you a rancher?"

"Hardly, I'm a retired Army Noncom. I hadn't ridden a horse in over 30 years."

"Mom put you on a very gentle mare; most people can ride her well."

"Thank God for small favors."

"Coffee?"

"We just came from Jim and Julia's. I don't know about Dan, but I've had about all the coffee I can take."

"We still have that six-pack of Mike's homebrew."

"It's a little early," Dan replied.

"It's Saturday and you should really try it Dan," I suggested. "I've never known a Top to turn down a beer."

"Maybe just one."

"I'll join you," John said.

"Are you old enough to drink?"

"Not really, but it good stuff."

"I'll take one too, but Mary can't have one. How are you doing Mary?"

"My back is killing me and the baby is trying to kick her way out."

"His way out," John corrected.

"Didn't you have an ultrasound?"

"Doc said it wasn't indicated. I did what you told me to do and started my prenatal program early."

"Umm, this is a very good beer. Who was Mike?"

"Rachel's late husband, killed that the Massacre."

"Oh, that Mike, sorry."

"He had a recipe too and I think that Ray is working on a batch."

"Does everyone here make alcoholic beverages?"

"Not unless Don started making wine."

"Well, if he does and his wine is as good as the bourbon and the beer, you ought to call the place Nirvana."

"Do the two of you want to have lunch?"

"What are you having?"

"Chili."

"Dan?"

"I'll try a bowl, thank you."

"Don't go to any trouble May, I can dish it up. What do you have to go with it?"

"A loaf of homemade bread, served with homemade butter."

"You slice and I'll scoop."

"There are diced onions and shredded cheese in the refrigerator. I also have Jalapeños if anyone wants them. John, would you get them please?"

We stared in on the chili and about half way through when Dan said, "I think I have had a bowl of chili like this once before."

"Oh, where?"

"At the gates of Hell. Could I please have a second beer?"

"Sure, but watch it, It's about 10% alcohol."

"Good, it might numb my mouth."

When we finished, I offered to help with dishes, but Mary told me she'd just have John rinse them and put them in the dish washer.

"In that case, I think we'll take a potty break and continue our ride. Thank you that was very good."

"Not too hot?"

"Young lady, I'd eat your chili any day," Dan smiled.

o

"Where to now?"

"We'll finish the fence circuit and go back home. Give me a minute to tighten your cinch."

"I can't remember a day like this in a very long time. Nice kids, you said they were foster children?"

"Yes, I couldn't have children and after the war we provided a home for these two. They'd been having problems with the placements, physical and sexual abuse. The big German Sheppard you see is named Shep. He belongs to both of the kids, but has been staying with John and Mary these days."

"I've seen dogs like that; they're nothing to fool with."

"We'll finish up the ride and then begin thinking about supper."

"We just ate."

"There no rush Dan, but I did take out 2 very nice New York Strips."

"How do you do it, June?"

"Do what?"

"Have a figure like you do and eat like there's no tomorrow?"

"You weren't paying attention. I had one egg and one slice of toast for breakfast, a small bowl of chili with a half-slice of bread for lunch and only plan on the steak, mushrooms and a small potato tonight. If I snack, it's usually on a carrot stick."

"I really should be getting home."

"Is there anyone waiting for you?"

"Not really."

"You can use the phone and make any calls you need to make."

o

My having drinks two nights in a row would have set a precedent. I knew that Dan enjoyed Randy's bourbon so I served him some the way he wanted it, on the rocks. I used the downdraft grill on my Jenn-Air to cook the steaks. The spuds went in the oven and I opened a can of button mushrooms to sauté in butter.

"I hadn't planned on staying one night let alone two, June, I didn't bring enough clothes."

"Give me your things and I'll run them through the washer."

"I really should be going."

"Stay, please. I enjoy your company and it's been a while since I've had a man around to fuss over."

"Ok, but I absolutely have to go home tomorrow."

"I send a couple bottles of the bourbon with you provided you don't tell anyone where you got it."

"Cross my heart."

"How do you like your steak?"

"Medium?"

"Me too."

I found the bottle of Merlot and uncorked it to go with the steaks. The steaks turned out perfect, better than usual. During dinner, it occurred to me that I was trying very hard to make a good impression on Dan. There was just something about him, he was direct, honest enough and yet laid-back in a way. Jim hadn't said anything, but Mary gave a wink when we left. I not positive what she was thinking, but I wasn't ready for that.

"Thank you for dinner, restaurant quality steak."

"You're welcome, want to watch TV?"

"I suppose, but it will probably be reruns."

"I'll put your things in the dryer, pick the channel."

Dan put on a rerun of an old program, *Without a Trace*. It was the episode where Samantha tries to figure out why Martin's behavior is so erratic. I knew Martin had it figured out when he uttered the 3 words, *I don't know* in reply to her question, *how can I help you?* His reply indicated that he realized he had a problem and was willing to admit it. He later showed up at an NA meeting, his first step on the road to recovery.

I probably shouldn't have sat so close to him on the couch. What can I say; it was nice having a man in the house. When the dryer buzzed, I took his shirt out and hung it on a hanger and put the whites in to dry. Dan said that he still had a clean pair of jeans. We watched a couple of reruns and then the news. For a change there didn't seem to be anything brewing but the weatherman had several comments about the unseasonable warmth. After the news, Dan went to his room and me to mine. I was tired and asleep in minutes.

o

"Good morning, pancakes with bacon ok?"

"Thank you. I'll have breakfast and then I really should be going."

"Sleep well?"

"Two nights in a row, it must be the Country air."

"What did you think of the farm?"

"It's big, and reminds me of a corporate farm."

"It is a corporation, but only for liability reasons. Have you ever farmed with horses?"

"I haven't; my grandfather did. I suppose my father did as a kid. All we had were a couple of saddle horses."

"Where in Iowa were you from?"

"Clarinda. That's in southwest Iowa. Glenn Miller and Marilyn Maxwell were born there."

I didn't recognize the name Marilyn Maxwell, but most people know who Glenn Miller was, a band leader from the big band era who disappeared during WW II. Dan explained that Maxwell was a blond singer, sort of a cross between Joan Blondell and Mae West. When compare to Marilyn Monroe, she replied, "Hey, I'm the blond with her clothes on."

After breakfast, he showered and shaved, changed clothes and was off. I could have kissed him; we settled on a hug. I gave him those two bottles of bourbon, too. If nothing else, he'd be back, just to get more bourbon. I didn't see him again until Wednesday when he popped in to know if I wanted to go to lunch. I couldn't leave but we ate lunch in the cafeteria. When all I got was a salad, he gave me a knowing look.

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 5

"Are you free for dinner Friday night?" I asked.

"Only if I buy."

"I'll bring a change of clothes."

"Bring more than one and you can stay in my guest room."

"We'll see."

I wanted something that was casual dressy or dressy casual. If I went the first route, an accessory or two could make it full dress up and if I went the other way I could dress down but not up. I had just the thing, an outfit from Maurice's that was only casual because of the open knit sweater. If I left the sweater off and added a string of pearls, it could pass for full dress up, just short of a cocktail dress. It was red with a black sweater.

My bag had my makeup bag, a nightgown, a couple of changes of underclothes, jeans, western cut shirts, pumps, boots and jewelry. The dress and sweater were in a plastic bag. We only had a single call on Friday, an auto accident with minor injuries. When I got off at 5, I showered and changed, taking special care with my makeup. I made it to the club around 6 and Dan was waiting. He was wearing a sports coat and slacks with an open neck shirt. I thought I saw the bulge of tie in his pocket. I must have laughed.

"What's so funny?"

"Look," I said, showing him the string of pearls in my purse.

"I wasn't sure and the club requires a jacket but not a tie. You look nice."

"Why thank you, it's a new outfit I never had a good reason to wear before."

"I'm flattered."

"Let's eat, I'm starved."

I'd eaten here before and they had an excellent petite filet. The wine list wasn't very good and hadn't been for several years.

"Would you like a cocktail?" the waiter asked.

"Proprietor's Reserve Old Fashioned?" I asked hopefully.

"Proprietor's Reserve on the rocks," Dan said assuredly. "You seemed skeptical."

"I knew they had it, but didn't know if it was served in the dining room."

"Five bucks a shot."

"In that case I'll pass on the wine."

"Oh don't, I don't eat out often and tonight is a special occasion."

"Really?"

The waiter brought our drinks before he had a chance to respond. "Give us 10 minutes," Dan told the waiter.

"Yes, really. This is the first time I've been out to dinner since Kathryn died. And look at you, the Lady in Red."

"Don't please. I'm sorry; it's a rather painful memory."

"Let me guess. Randy bought you a red dress and called you *The Lady in Red*."

"What are you, a mystic?"

"No, but I did like the song too."

"I'll have the petite filet, baked potato with butter and chives and the mushroom steak topping, when he's ready to take our order," I changed the subject.

"Are you ready to order?"

"The lady will have the petite filet, medium, baked potato with butter and chives and the mushroom topping. I have the regular filet, medium, baked potato with everything and the mushroom topping on my steak."

"Wine?"

"Bring us a split of number 113, the Merlot."

(While its flavor profile is similar to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot tends to be less distinctive and slightly more herbaceous overall in both aroma and taste. Ripeness seems critical; both under ripe and overripe grapes lean away from fruit and towards herbaceousness. Merlot has slightly lower natural acidity than Cabernet and generally less astringency, therefore usually a lusher mouth-feel.)

"I didn't mean to dredge up a bad memory for you, June. Red really is your color, you know."

"You didn't know, Dan. Perhaps I'm overly sensitive. You should have heard Randy trying to croak out *The Lady in Red*; he really didn't have a singing voice."

"Neither do I, but I learned the words for Kathryn."

"Were we a lot a like?"

"Yes and no. If you come over, her picture is on display, you can see for yourself."

"I'll take you up on that."

◦

Kathryn was striking and about my size before I lost the weight; the same and yet clearly different. If I styled my hair the same way she did, I suppose we might pass of distant cousins. I knew our personalities weren't the same; she was less outgoing and, according to Dan, timid. I may be a lot of things, but I wasn't timid.

"Do you mind if I change?"

"Let me show you the guest room."

I changed into jeans and a shirt. Were you thinking, I was *getting comfortable*? Not on a second date I wasn't and if taking Dan home for dinner didn't count as a *first date* then this was our *first date* and it wasn't going to happen. Anyway, we weren't a couple of teenagers...

"Do you want to watch a movie?"

"What do you have?"

"Just about everything up to 2009."

"Do you have *The November Man* from 2007?"

"Who was in it?"

"Pierce Brosnan."

"Oh yes, we have all of his movies, I'll get it."

The movie was a spy movie based on the novel *There Are No Spies* by Bill Granger. Brosnan was retired American agent Devereoux (code name November). He was an average, maybe above average, actor who had played James Bond in several films. He put the movie on and we were sitting on the couch, when Dan stretched his arm out and

laid it on the back of the couch. Was that a signal for me to snuggle up against him? It's hard when you been out of the game for so many years to know these things.

Unbidden, he had made me another Old Fashioned and was sipping some more of the bourbon. At that moment, had he asked, I'd have probably said yes. He seemed, however, to be engrossed in the movie. Was Dan just being polite, or was the drink an ice breaker, or was he thinking, *candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker?* I was thinking about him so intently, I missed half the movie. When the movie was over, we visited a bit and then he said, "I'll bet you've had a long day and would like to turn in." We went to our rooms and I changed out of my clothes and into my night gown.

o

I got home Sunday afternoon. It was near February and it hadn't really cooled down with temperatures remaining in the 70s during the daytime. I saddled my horse and rode over to Mary's to see how she was doing.

"How are you doing?"

"The same, worse, I don't know. I tried to call you, where have you been?"

"I went out to dinner with Dan Friday night. He invited me to stay and I did."

"Did what?"

"Stayed. In his guest room."

"What did you do?"

"Well, we watched a movie Friday night and went shopping on Saturday. We slept in this morning and I came home this afternoon after we had brunch."

"You know what I mean."

"Yes I do, young lady, and it's nobody's business; not yours, not Jim's, not anybody's."

"You didn't say nothing happened."

"I didn't say anything did, either. I said that it was none of your business. You can assume whatever you want, you will anyway. End of discussion, Mary. Did you know that our bourbon goes \$5 a shot in Garden City?"

"\$5? Have we underpriced it?"

"I'm not sure, but I think we could consider raising the price beginning with the 3rd batch to \$20 a bottle or \$240 a case."

"That would crank up our take to over \$45,000."

"The gross would be \$45,440, there's the price of the bottles and labels to consider. I'll have to find and buy more of the Avery labels, I didn't have that many. There are 600 labels per box and they cost about \$30 a box, when you can find them, they're the #5164 label. The bottles are about \$1 each. We'll probably only clear about \$42,000."

"Oh, mom, do you have to count every penny?"

"Yes, we have to give Jason his wages plus 5% and then divide the money 3 ways. The gross isn't all profit, Mary."

"So did you?"

"Did I what?"

"Sleep with the guy, what's his name, Dan?"

"I'm leaving; call me if you need anything."

o

When I walked into the house, Marilyn was sitting at the kitchen table. I wasn't surprised; I'd seen Paul's pickup.

"Hi Marilyn."

"I let myself in."

"So I see. Did you make coffee?"

"I can."

"I'll do it."

"Have a good time Friday night?"

"Yes, thank you."

"And?"

"We went shopping on Saturday, slept in late today; I made brunch and was home by one."

"That's it?"

"As far as I know, yes."

"I see the look on your face, tell me."

"Tell you what?"

"What was he like?"

"Dan was a perfect gentleman. I like him, he's considerate, remembers little things like how I liked my steak and what I drank."

"Are you sleeping with him?"

"Are you sleeping with your Marine?"

"Oh, him. I dumped him and got a new one, 28 years in the Corps. As to your question..."

"I thought that would be your response, I have nothing to say."

"I've known you how long? Never mind, I think I know. I'll keep my opinion to myself."

"Good. Coffee's ready. Help yourself; I have to powder my nose."

"When I got back, her next question was, "When do I get to meet him?"

"Maybe next weekend, we'll see, I haven't asked him to come out yet."

He'd said he'd be out Friday night, but I didn't need to tell Marilyn. I'd found a new interest in my life. He was neither better than nor less than Randy, just different. The human heart is very strange; it can expand to make room for the love of a man, and later 2 children. Was there a limit? Could I learn to love Dan if things worked out? Was he all that he appeared to be? Would his sons resent me the way that Jim seemed to resent him?

Doc claimed Paramedics need a year of seasoning after they're certified. Generally, they are assigned to an experienced paramedic who acts as a training officer or a guide. Emergency medicine is built on the differential diagnosis, explained earlier. We follow protocols based on urgency, Airway, Breathing and Circulation. We learned those things as EMT-1s. The further up the food chain you get, the more you can do to restore and maintain them. I think that emergency medicine must be a calling, more than a discipline. It a discipline clearly, but it's more than that. It's nothing like a doctor seeing a patient in the office, this is often life or death and time is the enemy. QuikClot, for example, doesn't repair the torn vein or artery; it just stops the blood loss.

The ER doctor has to decide if surgery is required and which injury requires the most

attention. He has to decide if the patient will bleed out before they can do an MRI, it isn't an easy job. These days, you can see anything from the common cold to an aneurism in the ER. You'll also get asthma attacks or other forms of acute respiratory distress, strokes, heart attacks, and depending where you're located, gunshots.

Out in Loma Linda hospital, where they have the venom ER, they have another set of choices, what species of snake or insect was involved, which is the correct antivenin? One of the largest antivenin banks in the US is at the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue. They have 38 types of antivenin covering 95% of the world's snake species. They also have antivenin for spiders and scorpions. There are hundreds of bottles and when you consider that one bottle of CroFab runs \$750, you can understand why the refrigerator is locked.

We don't get many rattlesnake bites in Kansas, Copperhead, Cottonmouth, Massasauga, Timber ratter and the Western (Prairie) rattlesnake. Here in western Kansas, we mostly see the Prairie rattlesnake. A person might find hundreds in a winter den. A person has to watch the prairie dog holes.

o

"I hope you like fried chicken."

"Smashed potatoes and gravy?"

"What do you want for a veggie?"

"Pick something you like, I eat them all."

"The bourbon is in the cupboard and you know where the ice is, help yourself."

"I'd settle for a beer."

"Six-pack in the refrigerator."

"The homebrew?"

"Yes. It's been there ever since..."

"Got it."

We had more green beans than any other vegetable, I opened a quart and heated half, with a little vinegar and bacon bits. The gravy came out just right, thick, but not too thick.

"How's your wrist?"

"It stopped hurting and I haven't had to take any more of the Tylenol."

"Don't be in a hurry to take the splint off, those ligaments need some time to mend. The amount of rehabilitation and the time needed for full recovery after a sprain or strain depend on the severity of the injury and individual rates of healing. For example, a mild ankle sprain may require up to 3 to 6 weeks of rehabilitation; a moderate sprain could require 2 to 3 months. With a severe sprain, it can take up to 8 to 12 months to return to full activities. Take care to avoid reinjury. Your doctor will tell you when it's time to start physical therapy to get the wrist back to full strength."

"I'll be laid up that long?"

"You should be fit by spring."

"My boys asked about you."

"What did you say?"

"I told them that I met a very nice Lady at the hospital when I sprained my wrist. They asked a few other questions that I wouldn't answer."

"I didn't either. I don't know who was worse, Mary or Marilyn. Did you bring clothes so you can stay?"

"Yes and you won't have to wash, I brought 2 changes. Say, do you have a range or a place to shoot? If I'm going to carry that hog leg, I need some practice."

"What weapons were you qualified with in the Army?"

"The M-9, M16, M203 and at one time, the M21."

"We have a couple of M1As, but Marilyn has a Super Match that was Paul's. I don't think she shoots it; maybe I can work out some kind of swap with her. That's about as close as I can get to a M21 Tactical Rifle."

"You don't need to do that."

"I think maybe I do, I like you Dan. Unless you object, I think I'd like to spend more time with you."

"June, the feeling is mutual. When I first saw you that day in the hospital, you almost took my breath away. I know that we've only known each other 2 weeks today, but this is a friendship I want to keep."

"I need to finish my first year of Paramedic work to get what Doc Williams calls seasoning, but I not sure I really want to make a career out of it."

"What about you're becoming a PA?"

"I've thought about a lot of things this past week and I don't think I'll pursue that."

"This could be awkward."

"Why would you say that, after last weekend?"

"I don't really know. I guess I was thinking about my boys and your kids."

"I'll come to your home next weekend and you can introduce me, if that's ok with you."

"It's ok with me, but I don't know if it will be ok with them."

"All Mary wanted to know was whether we slept together. I haven't seen Jim this week so I can't tell you what Mary may have told him. He was acting overly protective when you met him and if I have to, I'll sit on him."

"That is strictly up to you."

"Yes, it is, isn't it? Put your things in my room tonight."

o

Dan and I talked a lot that night. We decided that he would move to the farm in July, after I finished my year and quit my job. He could help with the harvest and learn to make bourbon and biodiesel. We didn't make as much as we had at first, but still planted 600 acres of soybeans, that was converted to biodiesel. The real problem I saw was that we had a year without winter; that worried me. With the river dry, the only water we had was whatever rain we got and our wells. There were 4 wells on our section, but they weren't large wells. The man from the extension office said we'd need big wells if we wanted to irrigate, a 12" well on each farm.

On Saturday morning, I called to let Marilyn and Rachel know and Rachel said Ray would handle it. Marilyn said she'd put her Marine in charge. They were getting married, she said.

"What's his name?"

"You wouldn't tell me anything."

"I wouldn't tell you if I was sleeping with Dan, but I did tell you his name. I didn't ask you if you were sleeping with him, just his name."

"It's Deke Jones."

"As in Deacon Jones, the football player? Deacon Jones is a black man."

"That's his nickname silly, his first name is David and he's white."

"Deacon Jones's first name is also David."

"Same name, different guy. This guy is a retired Gunny and never played defensive end."

"30 year Marine?"

"Twenty-something. Have you talked to Rachel lately?"

"Yes, and I didn't like the sound of her based on the call. I know Doc is treating her for depression. How bad is it?"

"Either the meds aren't cutting it or she stopped taking them June."

"I'll let Doc know."

"I don't know what to do, kiddo, she's really down in the mouth."

"She's stuck in her grief, Marilyn. Dealing with death is part of life but for some people the grief associated with losing a loved one is so crippling that it dominates their lives for years to come. It is estimated that as many as a million Americans a year develop a chronic, disabling condition known as *complicated grief* brought on by the loss of someone they love. The symptoms differ from normal depression, and research suggests that the treatment should as well."

"How are you and Dan getting along?"

"I suppose we're what you should call *an item*."

"I thought so. Good for you. Rachel doesn't seem to understand that Mike died and she didn't. I sure wish she'd find herself a man."

"She won't even look until she gets over grieving Mike."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 6

"Yeah, huh?"

"Say, would you be willing to part with Paul's Super Match? I could give you one of our Loaded M1As and whatever you want in exchange."

"Is it for Dan?"

"He was qualified on the M21. That's one notch up from the Super Match and I thought it would make a nice gift for him."

"Maybe. Deke liked my M1A but wasn't sniper trained. It might depend on what kind of gift you had in mind."

"What do you mean?"

"If it was going to be a wedding present, in the future, I'll trade you even up."

"I'll be right over and bring Dan. Just don't say anything to him about the terms of our deal or to anyone else, for now. Is Deke there, I'm sure Dan would like to meet him."

"I'm not letting this one out of my sight."

"I know what you mean."

"Dan, Marilyn said she'd trade me even up for the Super Match. I'll get Randy's M1A and we can go over there now. I want you to meet her future husband."

o

"Master Gunnery Sergeant David L. Jones, good to meet you; call me Deke or Gunny."

"Command Sergeant Major Daniel C. Robbins, it's mutual, Gunny."

"If you two are done strutting your stuff, how's about we exchange the rifles?" Marilyn interrupted.

"You sniper qualified, Dan?"

"Used to be, on the M-21."

"We kept some of the M14s."

"I know; I wish the Army had. Very good weapon, but it's too heavy for the new kids."

"By the time they add an M-203 on the A4 and one of those fancy sights, it's just as heavy, but not as accurate. The only advantage is the weight of the ammo. But, I'll tell you Dan, once you have enough grenades for the M203, you're carrying more weight and aren't any better off. Force Recon prefers the M14 over the M16 most of the time."

"Been going with Mrs. Johnson long?"

"A while, her husband was killed in that Massacre. I probably met her 6 months ago. How about you?"

"I met June a little over 2 weeks ago. Sprained my wrist and had it checked out in the ER. We visited for a while and I asked her out for a drink. She said no, but invited me out for dinner on her farm instead. Last weekend, I took her out for dinner and we took in a movie, The November Man."

"DVD?"

"Yeah, my late wife really liked Pierce Brosnan."

"I'm sorry, what happened?"

"Breast cancer. Darned shame, we made it through the flu, the plague and the Chinese attack. She had a mammogram followed by an ultrasound and then a biopsy. They didn't find anything. So she skipped a mammogram and when they did find cancer it was too far gone."

"Do you have kids?"

"Two boys, they're both cops on the Garden City PD. June has 2 foster children, twins who must be about 19. The daughter is expecting any day and I don't know how well the boy and I hit it off. Did Marilyn say anything about June's kids?"

"Don't think so."

"The father was killed in Ramadi in an IED attack, closed coffin. She couldn't make ends meet and ended up working and somehow missed out on the H5N1 vaccine and couldn't use Tamiflu. Then June's Husband Randy was killed in the Massacre along with Marilyn's husband Paul and Rachel Jenkins's husband Mike. Have you met Marilyn's kids?"

"That's one for the books Dan. Susan married Ray Perkins and Don married Ray's sister Sandy. One big happy inter-married family; and you almost need a program to know the players. Apparently Ray and Sandy's mother has some kind of advanced depression related to losing her husband."

"I brought a bottle of Randy's bourbon. Don't know too many Marines who don't drink."

"I have an open bottle, care for a nip?"

"Maybe a taste, if the Ladies don't mind. Have you tried the homebrew Mike made for the 4th of July celebration just before they were killed?"

"That stuff will take your head off."

"June said that Ray had his dad's recipe and something about Don making wine."

"Oh that. That goes back a way. The remark was made that all it would take for them have a full line of illegal booze was Don making wine."

"Is he?"

"No, but I think he's planting some roots in spring to start."

"How long will that take?"

"I don't know a thing about making wine, Dan. The cuttings he got were for Merlot grapes."

o

"Here you go," Marilyn said. "We just swapped rifles; June has plenty of the 20-round magazines. There a partial case of something labeled M118LR down there, what do you know about it?"

"That's special ammo that matches the rifle. The scope is tuned to it, its match grade."

"Help yourself as long as you replace it with military surplus."

"We were going to have a taste on bourbon, any objections?"

"We'll join you, I want to propose a toast," Marilyn replied.

When Gunny had the glasses ready, Marilyn raised hers and said, "I raise my glass to toast the brave men we knew and to all the brave men and women who have given their blood, sweat and lives to keep this Country free. To the past, present and future."

"Hear, hear."

When I finished coughing from trying to down the bourbon, I said, "Marilyn the next time you propose a toast; do it when we're drinking wine."

"I meant to tell you, Don is going to try his hand at Merlot."

I guess this is the part Paul Harvey calls *Page 2*. It seemed clear that the new men in our lives held the former men in our lives in very high regard, it was a good start.

"What are we going to do about Rachel?" Marilyn asked.

"Get her into treatment and then see if Gunny can find her a few good men to choose from."

◦

"Did I detect a hint of marriage in our future?" Dan asked on the way home.

"If and when you're ready, Dan."

"If I'm going to move to the farm in July, it might make things proper. We're going to have to deal with the boys."

"I could never take Kathryn's place and more than you're taking Randy's place. They're going to have to adjust. I didn't think I could find another man to love 18 months ago."

"Are you saying you love me?"

"Starting to, love grows. But, you're about as close to love at first sight as I can imagine. I'll be your new *Lady in Red*, if you'll have me."

"June, I've been fascinated with you from the moment I laid eyes on you, can't you tell?"

I contracted with a well digger to put in a 12" well. I told him to go deep; I had a feeling that the year without a winter forebode something bad. Ray and Sandy ganged up on Rachel and she agreed to get treatment. Mary had her baby, a boy, on Valentine's Day 2015. They named him Randy John McCartney and he came out at 7 pounds, 6oz and 22" long. To top it off, Julia was expecting her first child. Finally, on Saturday, July 11, 2015, Dan and I got married.

◦

"I got a good price for my house in Garden City, hon. Do you have any suggestions on what I should do with the money?"

"Dan, you got it in gold, right?"

"125 Krugerrands."

"Put it up for now. There are your boys and grandchildren to keep in mind. We don't need it for now; the farm is clearing close to \$150,000 a year. A couple of more years and we'll have our herds built to the capacity of the land."

"I can't remember it being this hot in July. Do you suppose the climate is changing?"

"I think so, yes. Have you ever seen the Arkansas so dry? Oh, you're from Iowa, take my word on that. We planted gardens in April if you can believe."

"You saw what they showed on TV, the coastline has changed dramatically and much of Florida is gone. There wasn't time to build levees for a place as large as Miami, not as fast as the water level rose."

"What about the Keys?"

"Think Barrier Reef, June. The only way to see Key Largo is to play the old Bogart movie."

"The way I understood Global Climate change was that the reduction of salinity of the Gulf Stream would cause it to sink and cool off Europe."

"I read the paper on your computer about an abrupt climate change, they may have gotten it right, overall, but the order things happened in has been much different. Some of the things they predicted are right, it's dryer and windier but we haven't seen the cold, yet."

"That's why I had that well drilled. As long as there is water in the deep aquifer, we can irrigate to produce crops. Ralph said that we're going to need to replace some parts in that wind turbine sooner than he thought. He said he could get spares from the Sunflower Wind Generation facility."

"What does he need?"

"Replacement discs for the emergency brakes on the turbine. The high winds and gusts have worn them out earlier than planned."

"But you have backups, right?"

"Rachel has solar panels and Marilyn and I each have a pair of 10kw wind turbines. There are also the backup generators. We can use those while the main turbine is shut down for repairs."

"That set of exercises the hospital had me doing has my wrist back up to 100%, or close to."

"Great. How are you coming with the M1A?"

"I'm not a young as I once was, but I'm about as close to what I was years ago as I can get. Expecting trouble?"

"I hope not, but it is difficult to say. We got a jump up on the irrigation that some other farmers didn't. That will seriously affect the food supply. That's why we did 30 acres of garden this year; we'll each have the produce from the extra 10 acres to supply the stores."

"How do you keep up with it?"

"Hard lessons learned fast after the war."

"You've learned a lot for only 6 years. Is all of that medical equipment in the basement really necessary?"

"Most of it belongs to Doc. It is a bit dated now, but it still works and I've been trained to use it. We're all set to be a backup clinic to the hospital in Lakin. That basement is as well-equipped as some hospitals in 3rd World Counties."

"When did you and Randy do that?"

"Before the pandemic. Doc and I have kept the equipment serviced and have replaced things as they need replacing. The little pharmacy we have doesn't amount to much, mainly drugs for the 3 families and some of our neighbors. We rotate the drugs to keep them current. If there were ever another problem like the H5N1, I'd fulfill the role of a PA under the direct control of Doc, via radio."

"But you're not a PA."

"I know, but I'm as close as you'll find out here in the Country."

"I didn't see a battery bank for your wind turbines."

"We don't have one. The turbines put out AC, not DC. It's a rather elaborate wiring set-up in the well house. Our primary power source is the big turbine, the secondary is our wind turbines and the last backup is the generator and the way it is wired now, it's totally automatic. We can also access the high lines."

o

I'll have to give credit where credit is due. That new wife of mine could be harder than high tensile steel, yet soft and caring when the situation called for it. Barely 6 weeks after she'd lost her husband of 30 years she had enrolled in school and had followed up on plans the two of them had. It had taken me longer than that to bury Kathryn. They had done a good job raising Jim and Mary when they took them in. The kids were generally protective of June. I found it interesting that an outsider would have trouble telling they hadn't been born and raised on a farm. If a person considered all those kids had been through in their lives, they had turned out well rounded, healthy individuals.

I sensed, however, that Jim had something burning inside of him. It showed up whenever the subject of the federal government surfaced. In those rare instances, I sensed, rather than knew, that Jim had a score to settle with the feds. I can't say whether it was his father getting killed in the insanity they called Iraq, his mother succumbing to the H5N1 or Randy being gunned down by FEMA.

Each of the 3 farms had large herds of Clydesdale horses, and either Quarter Horses (Marilyn), Morgan's (June) or Tennessee Walking Horses (Rachel). The dairy herds numbered about 40 on each farm and they kept other cows strictly for raising beef cattle. In addition, each had a large flock of chickens and herds of hogs. June explained that Jason was salaried and got a small percentage of the farm profit for managing the farm.

There was a cheese operation that used about half of the milk, a biodiesel operation that produced all the diesel fuel they needed with some to sell to the County and City, small ethanol production that produced anhydrous ethanol and or bourbon. Surplus corn went to the E85 plant in Garden City. With few exceptions, a person could have built a wall around the three farms and ignored the outside world.

None of the farms had sheep; hence no wool and they didn't grow cotton. The commodities they had to depend on the outside world to provide were few in number, however: paper products, clothing, spices and a few food items. I incorporated my smaller gun collection into what June already had. One of my old friends who was still in the Army called one day just to say hi, extend condolences and congratulations, and catch up on old times. During the course of the conversation, he mentioned that he'd be retiring soon and was thinking of locating in a rural setting.

o

I pitched this area and also asked if he had some things I thought could come in handy in the future. He almost dropped the phone when I told him what I had in mind. It was, he said, doable despite severe controls now in place by a struggling government. It would take the coin of the realm, gold, but it could be done. I gave him a shopping list and we settled on a price. It involved munitions, certain individual weapons and a few crew served weapons.

My friend was an E-9 in logistics. Can you say *Supply Sergeant*? He fabricated a unit out of whole cloth that he then proceeded to supply a basic issue and subsequent re-supplies. He claimed that it couldn't be done and then proceeded to do it. It was a mammoth computer exercise these days that only required a single signature at the end of the line by someone wearing BDUs and CSM stripes. The signature didn't have to be legible, just on the paper. As mysteriously as the Platoon appeared on certain paperwork, it just as mysteriously disappeared a few months before he retired. A really sharp accountant could, with enough time, put it together. There were however, very few paper trails.

"Hon, I heard from an old buddy in the Army. He's getting out in a few months and looking for a place to retire. I hope you don't mind, but I really pitched rural Lakin. Also, I need a place to store a few things that I arranged to get from him."

"How much space do you need, the machine shed is nearly full?"

"Could you spare enough ground for me to erect a Quonset hut?"

"Sure, what are you going to store?"

"Military supplies. A Platoon worth of munitions, weapons, etc."

"Were you thinking aboveground or underground?"

"I hadn't thought about it."

"How big is it?"

"20' x48' with a 10' radius."

"There is an area by the machine shed you could use. Are you going to supervise construction?"

"Nope, it's a turnkey deal; it won't interfere with my work. However, don't be surprised if I'm occasionally dressed in BDUs."

o

I wonder what Dan is up to? I remember how Randy had to supervise construction of our greenhouse, so I just naturally assumed that Dan would supervise construction of the Quonset hut. No sooner had I said yes than he was on the phone talking to someone about the hut. A couple of days later, some fellas showed up, he showed them where I said he could put it and he went back to his chores helping Jason. They graded and put in a slab the same day and a few days later were back and popped that hut up in a matter of hours. I looked it over and it had the year 1944 stamped in one place. Dan paid them in gold coins, signed a piece of paper and they were gone.

After that, about once a month, he'd get a phone call and the next day wear BDUs. A 5-ton Army truck would pull into the farm, and unload the equipment into the Quonset hut, Dan would sign and they'd be gone. That continued for about 6 months and I didn't really have time to look into it. Either I trusted him or I didn't and when I said 'I Do' it meant that I did. The place wasn't locked so I could have looked at any time, but I didn't. We were very busy harvesting, canning, getting ready for winter, etc. I had gotten coal for the furnace, had the LP tanks topped off and they even had the bourbon made and stored. Because I was concerned about the ATF, I used an acquaintance of a friend as

a cutout to buy a shipment of 750ml bottles and the labels. I bought enough bottles to handle 3 years' worth of bottling, 750 cases of bottles.

We had Thanksgiving on the farm and invited his boys and their families. By this time any problems the kids may have had with him or I had evaporated. I managed to get everything done at the same time and on the table promptly at 2pm. This was our first Thanksgiving as a married couple and I wanted it to be perfect. I guess I struck some kind of resident chord with his boys when they learned that I was a Reserve Deputy with the Kearny County Sheriff's Department. Is there some sort of secret LEO handshake? It amazed the Sheriff to learn that Dan also had completed the necessary training to become a Reserve Deputy as had Gunny. He was surprised they had the time what with being career military types but he had the proof right there in his hands in black and white.

I think that Dan's boys were more surprised than the Sheriff, they knew better. I think he probably told them, *Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies*. I also think that by now a certain Sheriff had figured several things out. But, with the school having been destroyed on July 4, 2009, it was rather difficult for him to confirm what he suspected. In the aftermath of the Kearny County (or Deerfield) Massacre, changes had occurred throughout Kansas, indeed the Country. There wasn't one state that didn't have a state defense force beholdng only to the Governor of the state or his or her designee. There had also been some landmark Supreme Court cases, overturning earlier decisions and forcing the states to do the same.

There was still a National Firearms Act of 1934, it hadn't been overturned, but some of the supporting decisions had been. The F in BATF had its fangs pulled and getting their permission for a NFA/NFR weapon was mostly a matter of a criminal background check as it should have been all along. The 1986 law was also changed and the Registry reopened.

All of which made being Reserve Deputy Sheriff's superfluous, unless you wanted to help the Sheriff. My being a Paramedic meant that I got called out on any operation where there was the slightest possibility of someone getting hurt badly enough to need immediate medical assistance. I had, of course, upgraded the equipment that Randy and I had previously to reflect my new status, not that it took much. For all practical matters, there is only so much one can do in the field. The Sheriff had allowed lights and siren to be installed in the pickup, though the lights were behind the grill. If you're in southern Kansas and see a pickup with lights and siren bearing down on you, give way, it isn't Walker, Texas Ranger, it's just little ol' me and I'll run you right off the road.

*Country music singers have been a real close family,
but lately some of my kinfolks have disowned a few others and me.
I guess it's because I kind of changed my direction.
Lord I guess I went and broke their family tradition.*

They get on me and want to know:

*Hank, why do you drink? Why do you roll smoke?
Why must you live out the songs that you wrote?
Over and over everybody makes my predictions.
So if I get stoned, I'm just carrying on
an old family tradition.*

*I am very proud of my Daddy's name
although his kind of music and mine ain't exactly the same.
Stop and think it over. Put yourself in my position.
If I get stoned and sing all night long it's a family tradition.*

*So don't ask me:
Hank why do you drink? Hank, why do you roll smoke?
Why must you live out the songs that you wrote?
If I'm down in a honky-tonk some ole slick's trying to give me friction. I said leave me
alone I'm singing all night long it's a family tradition.*

*Lord I have loved some ladies and I have loved Jim Beam and they both tried to kill me
in 1973.
When that doctor asked me, Son how did you get in this condition? I said, hey saw-
bones, I'm just carrying on an ole family tradition.*

*So don't ask me Hank why do you drink?
Hank, why do roll smoke?
Why must you live out the songs that you wrote?
Stop and think it over, try and put yourself in my unique position. If I get stoned and sing
all night long, it's a family tradition!*

o

Don't blame me, Randy started it. Back when Mike and Paul and he went storming off to help the Kearny County Sheriff put a cap on FEMA's outlandish behavior. I guess June must have picked up on it and tried to pass it on. One day she comes to me with a piece of paper that proved I had completed a 22 week course necessary to become a Reserve Deputy. She also had one for Gunny that said we were in the same class. Let me tell you, she got lights and a siren installed in Randy's pickup and she gets called out at times whenever the Sheriff thinks it's one of those *Danger – Will Robinson – Danger* types of situations. Generally I'm available and go along. That's why I went ahead and got that Reserve Deputy Badge. If some bad guy thinks he's going to shoot my new wife, I've got a bit of a surprise for him. Besides, they could use a proficient shooter in the Reserve Deputy Pool. Gunny went along for the same reason, so he could go with Marilyn if she got called up.

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 7

Along about October, Jason pronounced the bourbon ready to bottle and June had a semi load of bottles she'd picked up somewhere. I also discovered a secret; they wore latex gloves when they handled the bottles and labels, leaving the BATF and the Kansas Revenue Department not a single clue as to who was producing the Proprietor's Reserve Bourbon. She also told me that she'd used a cutout to buy the bottles and caps.

After I got the final delivery from my friend in the Army in December, I took June to the Quonset hut and showed her what we had on hand. There were M16A4s, new, for 3 rifle squads, some including M203s for the grenadiers. There were 2 M249s per rifle squad too. The Weapons squad was equipped with M4s plus 3 M240s and one M2HB. There was a standard load out for every weapon times about 100. We had M67s, a few crates of M18A1s, and all manner of what had been standard military hardware about 10 years back. This was an Infantry Platoon that included 3 rifle squads and one weapons squad but we didn't have mortars.

The Army had transitioned to those Stryker Platoons ala FM 3-21.9. We were more set up like an Infantry Rifle Platoon ala FM 7-8. I thought that I'd better stick with the tried and true that I was more familiar with. Besides which, my buddy didn't have any spare Striker IFV lying around. As close as we could come to having a Combat Medic was my wife. I realized that there were ample weapons on the 3 farms for everyone, but remembered the story of when they had liberated Leoti with a force of 80 some people. There were also a few spare A4s, with that many machine guns and the necessary ammo; we might need more ammo bearers. I had 6 of those SPMOD accessory kits for the M4s and they were complete, including the Knight Armaments suppressors.

Not that I ever expected that we'd need what I had in the Quonset hut. On the other hand, when I bought the house in Garden City for Kathryn and me, I hadn't expected to ever need that basement shelter. Do you know what she said to me when I showed her what I bought?

"The only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys. Did you get medical supplies too?"

"There are some Combat Lifesaver bags, June. We found in Iraq that every soldier ought to be equipped with one and have the necessary training. It saved a lot of lives. Have you ever given any thought to how low the fatality rate was in relation to the casualty rate? It was about 8%, a record low. The bags were current when I received them, how long can we store the ringer's?"

"Properly stored, until the expiration date on the bags."

"I'm not a doctor, what is proper storage?"

"LRS, room temperature."

"I'll get a cart and move the cases to the basement."

"Is the hut heated?"

"Yes."

"Good, I'll have to make room in the basement. You can leave them here for now. You have the thermostat set at 55°, I assume?"

"Right, wide swings in temperature aren't good for ammo either."

"How much did all of this cost you?"

"30 ounces of gold."

"Including the hut?"

"That was extra, but it is a genuine, made during WW II, Quonset hut."

"I saw the date, 1944. You were talking about the inside floor dimensions, weren't you, this hut has 4' overhangs."

"56' including those, standard Navy issue for 1944."

Dan later said the hut was 10 ounces of gold, installed. He had 50 grand tied up in the hut and the stuff. It could just be expensive insurance, but someone always gets to collect on a life insurance policy. He thought this one up all on his own. Good thinking, because a few days later it started to snow. I thought the snow we got during nuclear winter was bad, but this cold came from Canada and the Indian was going to have to find a stump to stand on when it started to snow. Hey, it's a Midwestern expression, "butt-deep on a 9' Indian", search the web. Some say "to a 9' Indian", but you get the idea.

o

That was a switch; we went from a year without winter to a winter with record snowfalls. The atmosphere was saturated and when the cold air came in the air lost its moisture holding capacity. Released moisture comes down as rain, sleet, snow, ice or hail. The heater in the hut was propane fired and for a while there, I thought we could run out of propane, we only started with 1,500-gallons. If we had been depending on a propane furnace, we may have. We ended up on the generator, no problem there because we had 30,000-gallons of separately plumbed propane. Every home on the 3 farms had a fuel powered source of power, Randy and the fellas had seen to it.

Sure Rachel had solar power and we had backup wind turbines to the main wind tur-

bine. We also had a 30kw generator, Rachel had that small gas generator to recharge her batteries and Marilyn had a backup genset because the wind didn't always blow (from chapter 19 of Part I). I never thought we'd end up on generator power for 5 months. We could switch to imported power at the flip of a switch but those lines were down too.

"Do you think God is angry because we got married?"

"Why would you ask that?"

"I haven't seen snow like this since I was posted the Northern Warfare Training Center (NWTC) in Alaska at Ft. Greely. That scenario I read said cold, dry and windy, not cold, wet and windy."

"We needed the moisture."

"If we get heavy snow and the high temps we had last year, it will melt quickly and run off. What good would that do us?"

"None, but it would refill the Arkansas, Dan. It won't hurt us, except to delay planting until the ground dries out."

"Did you make it snow as my wedding present?"

"No the Super Match was your wedding present. That was the deal I struck with Marilyn, an even swap if I intended to use it as a wedding present."

"Just a darn minute, we had only known each other for what, 2 weeks?"

"I knew everything I thought I needed to know about you by then. When did you know?"

"For certain? Later than that, but I suspected it the moment I laid eyes on you and you didn't have a wedding band. I asked and found out you were a widow, just as I was a widower."

"The first night I stayed at your home, I made my decision when I changed into my nightgown. I stood there in the guest bedroom thinking. I really liked you and from everything I'd seen to that point, you were a man could I could love."

"Well, I uncrossed my fingers when I saw the door knob beginning to turn."

"It wouldn't be the first time a man and woman met and knew immediately that they were soul mates. I confess that I even surprised myself walking down the hall. I have always been very proper."

"I don't know what to say."

"Mary must have seen something in my face, she knew but I wouldn't confirm her suspicions and then the same thing happened with Marilyn. Randy and I were married 30 years, Dan. If I hadn't figured out what I wanted in a man by then, I never would. That accident of yours was predestined. How many times had you safely moved your table saw, hundreds?"

"I think I said dozens, but I can see what you're getting at. What great adventure are we in store for?"

"It has already started. The year without a summer was 1816 and that was attributed to the April 5 to April 15, 1815 eruption of Mt. Tambora in Indonesia. On July 4, 2009, we had a nuclear war during a period of global warming. The nuclear winter was immediately followed by a nuclear summer. Although it appeared to be returning to normal, the polar icecaps continued to melt along with the Greenland Ice Cap. That in turn raised sea level by nearly 2 meters as we discussed earlier about Miami and the Florida Keys.

"I'm not a climatologist, but my best guess is that this is all somehow interrelated and goes back to the nuclear war during the period of global warming. I could, on the other hand, be completely wrong. While prepare for the worst and hope for the best may be a cliché, it served Randy and me well and your selection of a home in Garden City would seem to suggest you may have the same leanings."

"I guess I do, I offer my Quonset hut and its contents into evidence as exhibit 1."

"By the way, many attribute the year without summer as a major factor in the settling of the Midwest."

o

"You're quite the historian."

"I'm not, but I was a good listener. My sense is that we should begin stockpiling like we did before the pandemic and the war. The first thing I plan to do in the spring is put in a bigger fuel tank to supplement what we already have. We need to store additional food and if that means contacting major suppliers, like canning jar suppliers, I believe we should do it. It will also mean larger pressure cookers so we can do larger batches. Some canners hold as many as 19 quart jars or 32 pint jars. Think about it Dan, 8 canners each processing 19 jars at once doing 3 shifts daily. We could home can 456 quarts or 768 pints in a single day with enough help. That's 64 cases of pints or 38 cases of quarts. Using the kitchen stove and the stove in the shelter, we have 8 burners, more than enough."

"If that does happen, I feel sorry for the children, they'd miss out on school."

"Marilyn taught school for years, it would be just a matter of keeping the roads clear be-

tween the 3 farms. I know that much of this is new to you, but between the 3 farms, we have tremendous storage capacities. When Mike acquired the other half section of his farm, he had the 10k diesel tank cleaned to store soybean oil. I really haven't had time to bring you totally up to speed, but with the snow, we're going to have plenty of time to talk and plan."

"Then the only things we really need to stock up on are the things we need and can't make for one reason or another."

"Right, if you can find another Quonset hut the same size, it could be used to hold those things."

"They made a bigger one, you know, they had a warehouse model that ran 40' x 100' with a 20' radius."

"Can you get one?"

"Probably."

"Do it and have it installed as soon as the weather permits, probably in May. I try to line up other supplies and have them stored in warehouses until we can transfer them. The corporation will pay for the installed hut and the additional supplies."

"There's one other thing, we to need to find my friend a spot to locate his mobile home."

"Talk to Jason, there are several spots on the section he could use, some already have wells."

"Just like that?"

"It would be a rent free trailer spot, about like what you'd find in a mobile home park. All we'd have to add would be a basement and septic system, we have excess energy most of the time and it's free to everyone on the 3 farms. All of our wells have good water. If you can find out, get the make, model and size of his home and we'll have the basement installed and a genset located. We'll probably opt for a propane generator, there is ample propane available. We'd probably also add a coal/wood furnace to limit the propane usage, the same as Jim's home."

o

"Here's the info you wanted on Tom's home."

"Do you know what he drives?"

"Diesel pickup, but I don't know about his wife's car."

"Next time you talk to him ask if it was designed to run on E85. If not, he won't be able to get fuel in this area."

"What's your biodiesel storage capacity?"

"10,000 raw soybean oil and 30,000 finished product. That's equal to our normal production from 600 acres of soybeans."

"And if you increased production for one year, you'd need storage for 60,000 gallons."

"We've always sold the excess."

"But you could increase your storage as a hedge against bad weather, right?"

"It would probably be cheaper just to put in one large central tank to store the excess. We only produce corn for feed and to sell to the plant in Garden City. I mean in excess of the little bit we convert to ethanol."

"So, with a warehouse of supplies and extra fuel, we could get by and survive for several years."

"Yes, as many as 10, depending on what we had on hand."

o

I explained to Dan about keeping the area around the buildings clear, with our large herds, this was especially important. The only school age children were Jason and Karen's. I talked to Marilyn via radio and she said she would teach home school, if necessary.

"Karen, this is June, I called to ask you about the boys. Did the school send their lessons home with them?"

"Good, I talked to Marilyn Jones and she will provide home schooling. The phone lines are probably going to go down so I'll send a radio home with Jason."

"Almost exactly like the winter of '09-'10, except this could get worse. If you need anything, tell Jason and we'll provide it."

I almost said, "June clear." The school had a weather report and made sure the kids took their books home with them together with an envelope containing *home schooling instructions*. Jim and John had struggled through the snow to help with the livestock. I asked and they were ok on supplies for the moment. If it kept this up, we were going to be in big trouble.

"Do you have coffee on hon? I'm almost frozen to the bone."

"How much road is clear?"

"One lane, to Jason's, about ½ mile. It's going to take me 2 days to get the road clear to Rachel."

"I'm going to put on a pot of something, which would you prefer, beef stew or chili?"

"Make it chili; maybe the heat from the inside will keep the outside warm. I'll have to work the road every day or it will close up tighter than a drum. Randy didn't happen to have a truck mounted snow blower, did he?"

"He used the tractor and the blade. The County doesn't always plow the roads if it gets bad enough. The phone north of here is down, we're on radios. Marilyn said she'd do the home schooling and I talked to Karen about Jason, Jr. and Daniel. Oh, I'll need wood in for the fireplace."

"How much wood do you have?"

"About 30 cords, they used to harvest 10 cords apiece during the first part of winter before the snow."

"But we're full up on coal aren't we?"

"We started full up on everything; I have a list I use. I'm also making a list of what to store in that warehouse, if we can get it built."

"Kate used to make lists."

◦

Neither Dan nor I were bashful about talking about our late spouses. Kate was Kathryn. People are known by the company they keep. In revealing a little about the people we'd spent most of our lives with, we were opening some hidden door revealing more about ourselves. It also helped to explain how we became the people we were now. We never compared the present with the past; they were distinct and separate, people wise. Even so, events are different. I remember Randy, or someone, quoting George Santayana. The past is a guide to dealing with your current circumstances, which in this case, weren't good. Have you ever heard someone say something like, *I remember April of '74 when it snowed 2'*?

◦

"A snow blower, huh? If we could find a good used diesel truck with a blower mounted, we ought to consider it, Dan."

"You don't believe that this winter is just a fluke?"

"It could be, but look out the window at your Quonset hut and then tell me it's a bad idea. Say, when does your friend get out of the Army?"

"June 10th. By the time they split and move his home and get it reassembled, we'll be close to July."

"Do they have children?"

"Tom and Elvira have 2 grown children. He didn't say where they were, we'll have to ask when they arrive."

"Elvira?"

"He calls her Elle."

"Black hair, slinky clothes?"

"No she doesn't look anything like the Mistress of the Dark."

"The reason I ask is that Cassandra Peterson is from Manhattan, Kansas."

"Assuming she's still alive after the beating LA took."

o

He said, *Heat on the inside*, didn't he? You couldn't eat it hot out of the refrigerator, but I over did it a bit with the chillies. It gave him an excuse to drink a cold beer. You think it was a short courtship? Honey, when you're in your early '50s, you don't date 'em for 4 years. If a good one comes along, you'd best grab 'em before someone beats you to it.

"I hope this wind dies down, we need to run the big wind turbine for a while."

"I have the road open to Gunny and Marilyn's; I get it to Rachel's by tomorrow afternoon."

"Good, she radioed Marilyn and she has less than 48 hours' worth of power in the storage batteries, even with the generator."

"Why doesn't she have a bigger generator?"

"Mike always cleared the snow off the solar panels. Ray could do that if the wind died down, but it hasn't. And, until it does we can't run the big wind turbine."

"They have diesel fuel stored don't they?"

"Yes, why?"

"After I get the road clear tomorrow, I'll work the other direction and try to get into Lakin. Maybe I could find her a diesel generator, a rental if nothing else."

"You'd do that?"

"Rachel is your friend and our neighbor. Maybe I can't fill the boots that were left sitting here, but I can be a good neighbor."

"You doing just fine; don't worry about it, Dan."

o

Back in the '90s and the first decade of the new century, the US imported diesel gensets from China. They were inexpensive by comparison and were well built, probably by slave labor. Parts were a definite problem after the war, but if I could find Rachel a 12kw China diesel generator, they could run it on that biodiesel they had stored. While I was in town, I could also check out the possibility of acquiring a used diesel truck with a snow blower mounted.

I didn't find the snow blower I had in mind, but I found a Hanson snow blower for a $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck with its own Kohler 27hp gas motor. That would do nicely so I had it mounted on my pickup. Oh, GMC Sierra with the 6600 turbo diesel, manual transmission and 4WD. I got 2 12kw China diesel *portable* generators in Garden City and said hello to the boys while I was in town. I set the generators on top of the load of sand I got to weigh my pickup down and headed home. The Kohler gas engine was a late model that ran on E85, BTW.

o

"Why did you buy two?"

"One is a spare for anyone who might need it. You should see that blower work, it blows the snow almost 50'."

"I thought you got lost."

"Nah, I muscled my way into town, asked the Sheriff and he told me where to find what I wanted in Garden City. While they were mounting it and the controls, I visited with the boys. They said to tell you hi. They hauled me around in a cruiser and we found the generators. I paid for them and told the guy to hold them for me; that I'd pick them up on the way out of town. When the pickup was ready, I got a load of sand for weight, picked up the generators and headed home. I plowed the road on the way home so we can get to Lakin now."

"We'll have to get a 2 meter radio and mount it in your GMC, Dan. I was worried you got stuck or something."

"The Sheriff said he'd radio you and let you know, he didn't?"

"He may have, I didn't hear the radio. We'd better get that generator to Rachel and Ray."

"Does he have one?"

"I don't know."

"Maybe it's a good thing I bought two. They're new in the box, but predate the war. They'll be good until they wear out, but I really doubt there are any parts available."

o

"Oh, thank you, we would have been out of electricity before dark. We'll take both of them," Rachel smiled.

"Feeling better?"

"Much. Marilyn said that come spring, Gunny would introduce me to some of his friends."

"Looking for a few good men, are you?"

"One will be quite enough. What do I owe you for the generators, Dan?"

"Five ounces of gold, but I can wait."

"Nonsense, I have money, hang on and I'll get it."

"Ray, those gensets have extra-large tanks but you'll have to read the literature to see how long they will run on a fill up."

"That's all right Mr. Robbins; I'll plumb them into 55-gallon drums so we won't have to worry about them shutting down at night."

"Just call me Dan, Ray."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 8

"Ok Mr. Robbins."

My new husband was a winner, a gentle man through and through; and a gentleman. Wasn't half bad in... oh never mind, I might tell Marilyn but nobody else needs to know that. The winter of '15-'16 went on and on. I think by the time spring came, Dan was nearly out of shear bolts for the snow blower. When they finally got the phones up, he called and arranged for the 40'x 100' Quonset hut and for a contractor to put in a basement for his friend Tom. She'd better not look like the Mistress of the Dark or he and I are going to have a very serious talk.

Do you recall the old movie *Deep Impact*? Téa Leoni thought that the Secretary of Treasury or someone was having an affair with a woman named Elle? The correct term was ELE, Extinction Level Event. The major theories for an ELE include: impact events, climate changes, volcanism, gamma ray bursts and plate tectonics. I only bring it up because I was going through some of the files on Randy's computer and re-read the Abrupt Climate Change Scenario authored by Schwartz and Randall. While they hadn't predicted an ELE, some species could certainly die out if we were going through a major climate change. It is not as farfetched as one might think. The TTAPS study discussed the possibility of nuclear winter and when one considers it, nuclear winter was a major climate change. Now, if that were piled on top of global warming...

"First we had snow and now we have mud. What next Mom, a drought?"

"It may be possible, Jim. All of those seedlings in the greenhouse are beginning to out-grow their pots. That's why I had the well put in, in case of drought."

"What's in the Quonset hut?"

"The small one or the new one?"

"The small one."

"Go look, it's full of armaments. What one might call military surplus."

"Why are they putting in a basement and septic system and why are you putting in a bigger Quonset hut?"

"The basement and septic system are for Tom and Elvira, friends of Dan's who are moving here. The new Quonset hut is a warehouse for items we can't produce on the farm."

"Like what?"

"Toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, coffee, spices and all the things we get from

the stores. That would include clothing, etc."

"But why?"

"I believe, and Dan supports me on this, that we're entering a period of major climate change."

"With what outcome?"

"Maybe similar to the years after the war."

"I told you, didn't I? Revenge is a dish best served cold. If we have those conditions, the feds will try and step in to redistribute the food the same as they did last time. And, you say we have a Quonset hut of military surplus goods? Does that include weapons and things like that?"

"It most certainly does. We don't want another confrontation with the government, we lost 37 and they lost nearly 100. Things have changed since then Jim, mostly for the better."

"People haven't changed though. You give a person some power and a gun to back it up and they can easily turn into your worst nightmare. Julia will be over later with Jimmy."

"Getting big?"

"He's growing like a weed. It's a good thing you had plenty of the cloth diapers put up."

I had 12 dozen stored in the basement and had since before Randy died. The great thing about cloth diapers is that they make very good cleaning rags when they get too ratty to use as diapers. It had taken quite a while after the war to restart many of the manufacturing plants. Disposable diapers became almost impossible to find. So, when I saw a large stack of packages of cloth diapers in a Garden City store, I bought them and put them up, just in case. If we didn't need them, I had cleaning rags.

o

Up until the 1920s feminine hygiene products made of cloth and other natural fibers (such as moss and grasses) were simply the norm. In many parts of the world, they still are. With the introduction of disposable menstrual products in Europe and the US, women were suddenly sold their "liberation" from this monthly cycle; they could use this product and simply throw it away. People gave little thought to the environmental impact of manufacturing and disposing of these products. Nor to the chemicals absorbed into women's bodies from use of these products, many of which are scented, bleached, and made extra-absorbent through the inclusion of synthetic fibers.

Another darned environmentalist! It seems that they use dioxin to process the products. Someday, big cities will probably have special cans for *contaminated* waste.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D, NY, has re-introduced the Robin Danielson Act as H.R. 373. Its purpose is "to establish a program of research regarding the risks posed by the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers, and other additives in feminine hygiene products, and to establish a program for the collection and analysis of data on Toxic Shock Syndrome." It has been referred to the Subcommittee on Health, where it sits, and where it has died several times in the past. The FDA disagrees.

The problem with the Rely product wasn't the product itself, but how the product was used. There isn't any dioxin in the products and if there is a problem synthetic, it's Ray-on. They are considered medical devices and heavily regulated already. Don't blame me that most of the managers of the manufacturers are men. Tampax was invented by a man. A long time ago, in a galaxy right, right here - in 1936, actually - a Denver physician named Earle Haas invented a cardboard tube of compressed cotton with a little string inside. And in 1983, when the Today contraceptive sponge was released to the market - a sponge designed to be worn for 24 hours - TSS cases rocketed.

TSS is a group A streptococcal infection (GAS) and it can kill you. Not all the people who die from TSS are women; it kills men and children too. "Recently, severe invasive GAS infections associated with shock and organ failures have been reported with increasing frequency, predominantly from North America and Europe. These infections have been termed streptococcal toxic-shock syndrome. Persons of all ages are affected; most do not have predisposing underlying diseases. This is in sharp contrast to previous reports of GAS bacteremia, in which patients were either under 10 or over 60 years of age, and most had underlying conditions such as cancer, renal failure, leukemia, or severe burns or were receiving corticosteroids or other immunosuppressing drugs. The complications of current GAS infections are severe; bacteremia associated with aggressive soft tissue infection, shock, adult respiratory distress syndrome and renal failure are common; 30% to 70% of patients die in spite of aggressive modern treatments.

"Shock is apparent at the time of admission or within 4 to 8 hours in virtually all patients. In only 10% of patients does systolic blood pressure become normal 4 to 8 hours after administration of antibiotics, albumin, and electrolyte solutions containing salts or dopamine; in all other patients, shock persists. Similarly, renal dysfunction progresses or persists in all patients for 48 to 72 hours in spite of treatment, and many patients may require dialysis. In patients who survive, serum creatinine values return to normal within 4 to 6 weeks. Renal dysfunction precedes shock in many patients and is apparent early in the course of shock in all others. Acute respiratory distress syndrome occurs in 55% of patients and generally develops after the onset of hypotension. Supplemental oxygen, intubation, and mechanical ventilation are necessary in 90% of the patients in whom this syndrome develops. Mortality rates vary from 30% to 70%. Morbidity is also high; 13 of 20 patients in one series underwent major surgical procedures, which in-

cluded fasciotomy, surgical debridement, exploratory laparotomy, intraocular aspiration, amputation, or hysterectomy." (Adapted from: Dennis L. Stevens, PhD, MD)

How did I get there? Disposable diapers think about it.

◦

I wasn't certain which was worse, the snow or the mud. The County should put some new gravel on the roads. The upside to a winter was that I got a lot of time to spend with my new hubby in front of the fireplace. The downside was trying to get to Jim and Julia's to deliver Jimmy. One of the many blessings we had was a sleigh and while I got the Ob kit ready, Dan harnessed a Clydesdale, a bit of overkill, and off we went across the fields. It was an uncomplicated delivery and my kit included everything I needed.

*Dashing through the snow
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way
Bells on bob tails ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to laugh and sing
A sleighing song tonight*

Boil some water is what the doctor tells the husband to get him out of the way. That had happened between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Now it was mud month. It was also flood month and we can't plant month and why the heck did I ever get into farming month and when is summer coming month. Perhaps it was this year is cancelled due to lack of interest month.

"Why is it still raining?"

"I'm not sure, maybe because it's too warm to snow? The National Weather Service said that we could expect unseasonable rain."

"For how long?"

"Up to 10 more days."

"The river is bank full."

"How full?"

*How high's the water, mama?
Five feet high and risin'
How high's the water, papa?*

*Five feet high and risin'
Well, the rails are washed out north of town
We gotta head for higher ground
We can't come back till the water comes down,
Five feet high and risin'*

◦

You think I'm kidding, huh? We didn't get the garden in until late June. Every day, Jason would come tell us, "Too muddy." We had the time to stock the Quonset warehouse before we could plant the garden. We never did get into the fields during the summer of '16. They did get Tom and Elle's basement and septic system installed just in time for them to move in. Somehow I wasn't surprised when Elle turned out to have red hair.

The contractor had selected the Kohler GNAC and installed the generator in their basement, wiring it into the automatic transfer switch. He had run an intake and exhausts through the basement wall and added rain caps above ground level. Dan quickly paid Tom when they arrived and Tom and Elle went shopping for new furniture. The stuff they had wasn't good enough to send to Goodwill.

Oh yes, the sun did come out, finally, but it was too late to plant anything except grass and we had sufficient hay. We left the fields lie fallow, again. Our garden didn't do well and we had no food to sell. However, all was not lost; we had enough stored corn, wheat and barley to make 12 barrels whiskey. The price was now \$20 a bottle, \$240 a case and we sold 180 cases in less than a week, it was catching on. Perhaps next year we could increase production to 24 barrels. Our average aging time was running about 5 years.

The shine wasn't our only source of income. We sold chickens, hogs, cattle, eggs, cheese and milk. Not a banner year, but we had enough income to refill everything except the biodiesel tanks. We went ahead in put in the 30,000 gallon tank we discussed. The following year we'd refill our old tanks plus the new tank.

◦

"This is the part I remember most about farming, the bad years when you didn't make enough income to pay the Production Credit Association," Dan mused.

"Thousands of farmers get caught in that trap, Dan. They buy all the biggest, best, new machinery and get low crop yields in a market with falling prices. I was younger back then, but I can remember all the farm sales. The only people who made money were the auctioneers."

"You see and read so much about rural flight by youngsters going to school and learning a new trade. I can't say as I blame them. I got off the farm and made a career in the Army."

"That was a heck of a way to make a living."

"Someone had to do it and for a long spell there weren't any wars. Then we had Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Kosovo and Desert Storm. I didn't see action in all of them, just Desert Storm and 2 tours in Iraq in the second action. I never got so much as a scratch; lost good friends though. Those insurgents got weapons easily and started with crude IEDs, RPGs and AKs. It was rough and the enemy wore civilian clothes."

o

He didn't like talking about it, most soldiers who have seen action don't. Many people who have seen action say the same thing, hours of boredom followed by moments of sheer terror, or some variation on the theme. With the land free and clear our only fixed cost was property taxes and fuel. We could get by for a fair amount of time living off the garden, such as it was, and the sale of livestock and other commodities. Without a crop, the only concern would be feeding all of that livestock.

"I invited Marilyn and Gunny plus Rachel and the fella she's dating over for drinks and conversation Saturday evening, what do we need?"

"I'll ask Ray if he has a couple of six-packs. What were you planning on for snacks?"

"Buffalo wings and a veggie tray. There's popcorn if you want it."

"How about I invite Tom and Elle?"

"Good idea, I didn't mean to exclude them."

"I'll see if Ray can spare a case of beer. You know, it's getting late in the season, if we're going to add that new propane tank, it might be a good idea to do it now. I heard something about fuel shortages in the barber shop."

"How big do you think?"

"We should be able to get by with another 1,000-gallon tank if they're all plumbed together on some sort of manifold. We'll only need minimal heat for the warehouse."

"Better safe than sorry, I'll see if I can get storage for 3,000."

o

Stocking the warehouse hadn't been difficult; Wal-Mart and Sam's Club became our source for food supplies. We bought the staples we didn't grow by the case. I hadn't realized how big 4,000ft² of floor space was until we began stocking shelves. We could pack some things ourselves when we got a crop, wheat for example. We all baked our

own bread and made our own butter. The cheese processing was a combined affair. Don had established the merlot cuttings and in a year or two we'd have our own wine. We hit a manufacture's outlet and stocked up on work clothing, socks and underwear. The uniform of the day was blue jeans and either a shirt or blouse.

I had gone ahead and ordered the mason jars, before we knew what the weather would do. They mostly ended up in the warehouse with the liquor bottles. Glassware is less expensive when you buy it wholesale from the distributor; a case of jars ran about \$6. New jars come with rings and lids meaning all you need to add are extra lids for recycling the jars.

The National Weather Service is forecasting an early winter with moderate to heavy snowfalls, not good news for Kansas farmers. Expectations are for an early frost, possibly as soon as late August. The cooling of the northeast continues and the citrus crop from Florida established record lows this year. Market prices of livestock have risen in response to reduced feed grains.

The contest for the fall elections have heated up with Libertarian John Jay equally dividing the vote in most primaries. Jay is running on a platform to reduce the size of the federal government by up to 10% a year. The last major election where a third party candidate had such a strong showing was the 1992 election campaign when Ross Perot opposed Bush and Clinton. Jay maintains that in the years since the war, the US had maintained tight borders enhancing the job pool for Americans. In other news..."

"I've always voted Republican Dan. What do you think of this Jay?"

"The barbershop poll has him in first place by a wide margin. Some say he could pull as much as 40% of the vote. Personally, I think it's about time the people put someone besides a Republican or Democrat in the White House, both parties have lost touch with the people. I'm leaning towards voting for him."

"You were right about the propane, frost by late August; I'd have never thought that I hear that. July and August are traditionally the hottest months of the year. It could be another long winter. You men should try and harvest 10 cords of wood per family and I'll see if they have stoker coal available this year. The wood we have has been stored long enough it will be very dry and burn fast."

"You should replace that old furnace with a gas furnace."

"Not this year with fuel shortages and prospects for a long winter. You can use the horses to drag the timbers back to the farms, no sense in wasting the biodiesel."

o

When we butchered chickens, I generally bagged the parts separately. If you froze the chicken and then packaged it, you could pack it according to the cut; either breasts-

wings quarters or leg quarters. And, when a brood hen's production fell off, she'd end up packaged whole as a baking chicken. Each family processed meat according to the size of the family and the number of hired hands. We generally processed 3 steers, 1 dairy cow and 7 hogs, providing meat for our family (a side of beef and a whole hog per family) plus meat for Jason and Karen, Ralph and Johnny, and now Tom and Elle.

The hams were processed and divided into butt and shank portions and the bacon came sliced. I'm sure we ate too much bacon and sausage, we always had to get more bacon at Wal-Mart, but Dan preferred bacon and eggs over pancakes or cereal. If we did have pancakes, I still had to fry bacon or sausage. The beef was packed in small cuts; just enough for 2, like half roasts, half a round steak, 2 steaks, etc. The ground beef was packed in either one pound or two pound packages (meatloaf). One of the things I like most was the homemade sausage the locker plant produced, which accounted for the extra hog; it went with the trimmings on the other hogs into sausage, divided 6 ways. We also took the leftover fat and it rendered it into lard, it made great pie crusts.

o

You couldn't burn wood in a gas furnace. If the grates ever wore out I might consider it, Randy's father had put it in new a long time ago. They didn't build parts anymore. Unless it got very cold, you could load the stoker daily. The propane dealer was more than willing to install a 3,300-gallon tank, it meant selling us an additional 3,000-gallons of the moderately expensive fuel. That tripled our storage capacity and we wouldn't have to worry about running out. With that snow blower, we were well prepared for another bad winter with heavy snow.

"Are we ok on fuel for the generator?"

"It burns 4.2gph at full capacity, Dan. We always figured we had a 2 year supply. If the winds don't get too bad, we'll have power from the big turbine. Did you get the beer from Ray?"

"I got a case, that's more than enough. Anything else I can do to help get ready?"

"A nice hunk of the Pepper cheese might be nice. Cut a wedge of Colby while you're at it. You guys can get together in the living room and we girls will sit around the kitchen table."

"What do you think of Elle?"

"She's nice, but you never said she had red hair."

"After you started with that, 'black hair, slinky clothes bit' I didn't figure I'd bring it up. Tom's a heck of a man, just because he was in supply didn't mean he didn't see action. He did a couple of tours in Iraq too. He tells a funny story about the action. It was a

message that said (Word for word copy of a handwritten message):

26Mar03

Msg From: Gen Wallace (William S. Wallace)

For MG Swannack (Charles H. Swannack, Jr.) as follows:

Get your ass up here.–EOM"

"It would be hard to misinterpret that."

"Yep, clear and concise."

"When the snow comes, if we have a clear day, it would be nice to go for a sleigh ride. I don't want any more of the middle of the night with howling wind and snow blowing sleigh rides."

"What we ought to do is get some more of the sleighs. John and Mary have a barn and there's no reason they can't keep some of the horses. The same goes for Jim and Julia. They should keep their own riding horses and at least one team. Jason asked me if he could keep saddle horses and a team down in his barn. What would you say to dividing up the livestock except for the dairy cows?"

"That's a good idea; it would make less work here and give us more room in the barn."

"It would also divide up the feed resources in case of a problem. Having everything here made sense when it was just the 4 of you. We haven't kept up with the times."

"I wonder how much longer we'll get away with selling bourbon before the feds or Kansas comes down on us?"

"For a very long time June, provided we keep it a small local operation; we'd never want to do more than 24 barrels a year. And, just because we bottle it, doesn't mean we'd have to distribute it."

"I do like the way it's been handled, Dan. Except for our private stock and what's aging in barrels, there's little evidence of the operation."

"Right, just 500 cases of empty bottles in the warehouse, the still in the machine shed and 60 barrels of whiskey in the haymow, which will increase to 120 barrels over the next 5 years. It's real low profile."

Dan had a point, although you'd really have to look to find anything except the empty bottles. We may have produced 24 barrels this year, but were lucky just to get some food out of the garden, so the decision to increase the production to 24 barrels a year was pushed back one year. The bottle cases were buried under the cases of mason jars as a precaution but that wouldn't keep a sharp revenueur from finding them. Maybe it was silly, but we didn't keep everything set up all of the time. The stills didn't come out

until the mash was close to ready and once we were done processing the bourbon and the anhydrous ethanol, they were dismantled and stored. We didn't do the same with the biodiesel production equipment because it wasn't a problem.

o

The following night we had the little get together. We Ladies sat in the kitchen and discussed practical matters, like our personal lives, the coming winter, our grandchildren and the usual girl talk. The guys didn't take long to adjourn to the small Quonset hut to go over the inventory of defense supplies. They probably ended up sitting out there and telling war stories, that's what men do isn't it? Gunny had 28 years, Dan 30, Tom 30 and Rachel's boyfriend Hank, a retired Master Sergeant, 20. Dan had a handful of cigars and a bottle of bourbon when they left. They all smoked cigars, occasionally, but otherwise didn't smoke. The dynamite that Mike had, had been disposed of when the shipment of M67s came in.

I liked Elvira. She said her name had been a real problem over the years, everyone associating her with Cassandra Peterson, so she'd always preferred Elle. Many mistook it for a shortened form of Ellen. Both of their boys were in the Army, trying to make careers. One was a ranger trying to get into Special Forces and the other a combat medic. Tom, she said, had done 2 tours in Iraq, trying to keep the troops supplied with everything from rations, fuel and medical supplies to ordnance. He had been in the V Corps.

I mentioned Dan suggesting redistributing the livestock and feed supplies and Marilyn and Rachel thought it was a good idea. They had followed our old practice of keeping everything on the home place and it was causing problems. Then I mentioned the sleighs and how I thought it might make getting around easier in winter. The previous year, Dan had bulled his way to town to get the snow blower and could keep our road partly cleared if it didn't snow too much. The biggest concern was the predicted moderate to heavy snowfall and the fact that we hadn't grown any crops this past summer.

"Hey, it's snowing," Dan said when they came back in the house. The date was Saturday, August 28, 2016.

"How hard is it coming down?"

"Not too bad, no reason for anyone to rush home."

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 9

I noticed that the bottle was mostly full; they hadn't had much to drink, so driving wouldn't be a problem.

We broke up a little earlier than we'd planned because of the snow. There were odds and ends that needed to be taken care of before anyone went to bed. Dan told me that the fellas had helped him mount the snow blower on his pickup, just in case. He also said that Tom had suggested that we distribute some of the SINCGARS radios so that all the homes could keep in touch. The military was using a newer generation radio and our having the frequency hopping equipment would provide us with secure communications apart from what everyone else used.

The other men had each taken enough to equip their homes and all of their vehicles. He'd mount ours, the radios were the AN/PRC-119F(V) man packs that operated on 12vdc. There were also Spearheads, which a few years back had been the latest addition to the ITT Industries family of tactical communications systems. There were power supplies, he said, for every home on the 3 farms. I told him that the girls thought it was a good idea to divide up the livestock and feed supplies, but wondered what effect the snow would have on accomplishing that.

"I guess we won't know until we try, June. We can begin the process tomorrow afternoon after church and move the hay and feed first, unless we have a terrible snowstorm. If that happens we'll just have to wait for the first clear day."

"I guess it's a good thing you have the snow blower mounted."

"It's not coming down very fast, let's turn on the TV and get a weather report."

...that began earlier this evening is expected to clear before morning with more snow showers not expected until midweek. The National Weather Service advises that the massive arctic cold front won't hit Minnesota until late Monday and won't reach northern Oklahoma until Wednesday at the earliest. Long range forecasts show another front following that could hit us as early as 10 days. The cold is expected to spread as far as Florida, which is already experiencing massive rainfall.

"Do you realize that we only had 3 months without snow on the ground?"

"But we did get everything finished up during the past 2 weeks didn't we?"

"I got stoker coal, the LP tank and fuel and E85. We still need to do some odds and ends shopping, but it's not pressing. Did you say anything to the guys about harvesting wood?"

"It completely slipped my mind. I get in touch with them tomorrow and we'll see about getting that set up. We're going to need 50 cords, Gunny will need 30, Rachel will need

30 and we'll want 10 for Ralph and Johnny. That's a lot of wood and we already have 30 cords stored at every location. I've done some research and a cord of hardwood has about the same energy as a ton of coal. It might make more sense to get a second delivery of coal for everyone that can burn it and cover it with a tarp. There is a very large pile of tarps in the machine shed for some reason that we could use to cover the coal."

"Back just before the war, we sent Ray and Susan to TSC in Hutchinson and used the tarps they brought back to cover the hay we stacked around the barn to protect the livestock. That was quite the trip, they came back engaged and Ray had some new guns. I'll have to tell you about it some time."

*Oh the weather outside is frightful
But the fire is so delightful
And since we've no place to go
Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!*

"You sing about like Randy, Dan, not very well."

"Do you compare me with him much?"

"I don't do it at all! Do you compare me with Kathryn?"

"No. She was who she was and you are who you are."

"It's the same with me. You have all of the qualities I admire in a man, so I suppose that in some ways Randy and you are alike. I'd have to imagine that you would say the same thing about Kathryn and me, so let's just end the discussion at that."

"Let's go to bed, it's getting late."

o

"Is he always so full of fire and brimstone?"

"I guess it depends on his topic. I can just about tell you how bad it's going to be from the topic that's posted out front."

"Well from now on warn me and we'll just go home. I can only take a little of the sulfur. Did you leave something in the oven or is the big meal tonight?"

"I thought we'd warm up the chili and have a big meal tonight. At least the weatherman was right; we should be able to get everything moved by evening. I told Jason, Jim and John to be here right after church and why. I took out 3 small roasts; that should be enough to feed all of us."

"How much hay and grain do you want to move?"

"Better figure on an 8 month supply for whatever livestock they end up with. Take timothy for the Clydesdales."

"And divide the hogs, beef cattle, chickens and Morgan's evenly?"

"Right, but just 2 Clydesdale mares unless they want more."

"We're going to need 3 more sleighs, right?"

"Unless you want Tom and Elle to have one, yes."

"He doesn't have a barn and is a city boy. I'd imagine they'll go with snowmobiles."

"We should have some of those too so we can go riding with them."

"No more claws out?"

"She's very nice. If we do get snowmobiles, plan on enough for 6 families, maybe they're cheaper by the dozen."

o

The Arctic Cat snowmobile with the 4-cycle engine could handle E85. As far back as 2003, they met 2012 emission standards and then E85 got to be real popular. There weren't many E85 certified models to choose from, but June and I picked up an even dozen. The kids each got 2, Ralph and Johnny got a pair, Jason and Karen got 4 and we kept a pair. I said something to June about our doing something special for Jason's 2 oldest boys, Jason and Daniel; they were growing up and the age where a young man needs to learn to shoot a rifle and or shotgun.

"What did you have in mind?"

"I thought maybe I could take Jason aside and give him enough money to buy the guns. Or, if that isn't a good idea, Buy the guns and give them to him for his boys."

"I'll have to sleep on it, and I might talk to Karen about it to see how to handle it. I think the guns should come from their parents, not from us. It smacks of charity and Jason earns a good living. We don't want to hurt his pride, Dan."

"Ok, but don't take too long, if we're to buy the guns, that means going to Garden City or possibly even further."

o

I thought Dan had a good idea, but wasn't completely sure how Jason would feel. The

boys did help their dad around the farm so we could always make it a present from the company to reimburse them for their time. I don't think there's a man in the world that hasn't been sidestepped by his wife when things needed to be done. It was mostly a matter of delivery. When we talk guns around here, we're talking a complete set including any appropriate accessories and a starting supply of ammo. A brick of .22s doesn't cost that much. And anyway, the next farm north had a certain Gunny who had been a DI for a while. If Jason didn't have the time, Gunny could teach the boys to shoot. Dan was right, with the weather the way it was I had to get a move on.

"Karen, this Mrs. Robbins. Do you have a minute; I need to ask you something?"

"Is there a problem?"

"Nothing like that. My husband suggested that Jason and Daniel were getting old enough that they should have their own hunting weapons. He suggested rifles and shotguns, so I suppose he means a .22 rifle and a 12-gauge shotgun. It's ideal timing with Christmas coming but I wanted to talk with you first. Would either you or Jason object to the boys getting guns for Christmas?"

"We talked about it but figured we have to save a bit more before we did it."

"So you don't object to the idea?"

"No."

"There are several ways we could handle it: one, we can give Jason the money and he can buy the guns; two, we can buy the guns and give them to you to give them for Christmas; or three the farm could give the guns to them to repay them for work they've done helping Jason."

"I'll check with Jason but my first instinct is that they should get them from the farm. It would make them feel like they earned them and they'd be more inclined to take good care of them."

"Are you sure? We'd have to move quickly to get them before this storm blows in. It could be a bad one and we might be stranded here for a long time."

"Hang on, I'll talk to him."

--. --.- was replaced with ...---... around 1912.

"He says to buy them and we'll decide later whether we give the guns to the boys or the farm does. He also said to tell you thank you very much."

I walked out to the barn where Dan was mucking out stalls and muttering under his breath.

"Karen and Jason said to buy the guns and we'll sort out who gives them to the boys later."

"Thanks June, I'm going to leave now; I think that storm is going to hit in a couple of hours. Monitor SINCGARS on channel 1001 and if I'm going to be late, I'll let you know. Mind if I drive your car, my pickup has the blower and yours is equipped for a call out."

"Not, go ahead, but top off the tank on the way back."

o

I got to Garden City and went to Coyotes Shooters Supply. I bought a pair of Remington 870 12-gauge combos and a pair of Remington 572 Fieldmaster rifles. I figured 2 bricks each of .22 LR ammo and 2 mixed cases of 12-gauge ammo. The mixed cases each includes 25 slugs, 25 00 9 pellet buckshot, 100 rounds of #6 shot and a 100 rounds of #7½ shot so they could learn to wing shoot. I filled June's tank and headed home. Just before I reached Lakin I ran into the first snow flurries.

"June, this is Dan on 1001."

"Where are you?"

"Just returning to Lakin, it's snowing here."

"It's bad out here."

"I should be home in 10 minutes."

"Get everything you wanted?"

"Yes and no, I'll show you when I get there."

o

"It's getting nasty out there."

"It started here about 40 minutes ago. You said yes and no."

"I got the shotguns I wanted, but he didn't have the Ruger rifles so I got Remington pumps."

"It shouldn't make any difference, should it?"

"Actually the pump shoots shorts, long and long rifle shells and has a tubular magazine. I think it might make a better overall beginners rifle."

"Did you get them ammo too?"

"I got them 2 bricks of .22 and a mixed case of 12-gauge, each."

"I'm glad you radioed, when it began to snow, I started to get worried. We never did get a 2-meter radio put in your pickup. It's really coming down, just looking at it gives me a chill, would you start a fire in the fireplace while I make cocoa?"

"Sure. What's for supper?"

"SOS and eggs."

Dan hadn't said anything, but I'd noticed that he'd trimmed down a little, maybe 15 pounds. Could be that he'd just converted what little flab he had into muscle, he worked hard, especially considering he'd left the farm when he was a young man. He hadn't done this type of work for a long time. He pitched right in and did farm chores the same as the other men. With Mary gone off and raising a family, I got to do the eggs all by myself. I began to wonder how deep the snow would get this year and if we'd be able to plant crops next year.

o

We could always get a crop of grasses and try to buy bagged or bulk feed, if it came to that. A person can do whatever they want, provided they have the money and what they want is available. That being said, everything is available, for a price. It was going to depend on what nature had in store for us this winter. I should have told Dan chipped beef on toast, he was thinking hamburger gravy. The former is slab-on-a-slate and the latter is shit-on-a-shingle. I must have been 19 when I learned the difference, in the Army.

The military finally rescinded the no combat rule for women, when someone sued and won. That was long after I'd been out. Those were good times, the Army, and I'm sure it contributed to my independent thinking and my being as practical as I was. They had just introduced the MRE. Early MREs were notoriously poor in quality, earning them the nicknames "Meals Rejected by Everyone," "Meals Rejected by the Enemy," "Materials Resembling Edibles", "Meals Ready to Excrete", and even "Meals Rejected by Ethiopians" – in reference to a Country that was gripped by famine at the time. They had gotten it right by the time I got out.

Randy and I had met in the Army and by the time we got out were already planning marriage. Then that thing came up that resulted in my getting the partial and kids were off life's menu. Later, after the war, Jim and Mary came to live with us and life was looking good for a while; right up until July 7, 2013. I hadn't realized I could feel such pain. I pulled myself together and went to school, fulfilling, in part, a dream that Randy and I had. After, I met Dan and got a new lease on life.

Dan was a tender, caring man. He'd been cheated just like I'd been; when he had time to spend with Kathryn, she'd gotten sick and was gone. Being a CSM, I think he understood people and even better, had a firm grasp on our situation. Perhaps a Quonset full of weapons and munitions pushed it a bit, but if we were hit by a famine... I shudder to think of it, people in America fighting over food. This had been the nation of plenty.

"It is hard to imagine that in America, the wealthiest and most abundant nation in the world, 33 million people do not know where their next meal will come from. Our farmers produce enough to help feed most of the world's people, and they provide Americans with safe, plentiful, and affordable food, yet hunger is still a pervasive and persistent problem in our nation." That was in 2001, what now?

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"I guess I shouldn't have tried to sing *Let it Snow*."

"It's not as bad as I expected, it didn't take you very long to clear the road."

"True and the phone lines are still up. I finally got a line on some sleighs. There is a family in Nashville that makes them. I called and they have anything we want, they build 6 models."

"What are you going to do?"

"Haven't decide, honey, I checked and the roads are clear, for the moment. The next arctic cold mass isn't due for about 8 days, so if we're going to go, this is the time."

"How far is it?"

"Fastest or shortest way?"

"You can't go very fast in a truck, shortest way."

"900 miles."

"20 hours if you drove straight through?"

"Give or take, probably, yes."

"So you could drive there, get sleighs, lie over and be back in 2 days."

"In theory, yes. If we left at noon tomorrow, we'd get there about 8am the following day. Figure 4 hours to load up and that would get us to noon. I figure we'd be tired and leave the following morning. That's another 20 hours. Tomorrow is Tuesday and we'd start back on Thursday, arriving home in the wee hours of Friday morning. But, what would

happen if the storm blew in early? We could be stuck in the middle of nowhere and have to wait out the storm. Plus we have those Arctic Cats, I'm wondering if it wouldn't be a better idea to wait until warm weather."

"Why don't you talk it over with Gunny this evening?"

"Call Marilyn and invite them over, we'll sit a spell and talk."

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"Y'all sure make good bourbon. Randy had a good recipe, didn't he?"

"Oh, yeah. Imagine my surprise when I found out where it came from. June is worried that one of these days the government is going to shut us down. We don't have a license to produce the stuff and don't pay any taxes. I don't believe anyone cares, we don't make that much of the stuff."

"Shine has been around for a while hasn't it?"

"Randy had a history of American whiskey on his computer. I read the summary. The first bootlegger was John Hancock and the Revolutionary War was over, among other things, taxes on alcohol. After the Revolution the Country was in debt and Washington had to pay off the loans so a tax was imposed on liquor. That led to the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania. The people ran rather than fight the militia and soon after moved to Kentucky. That's where bourbon got its start."

"I knew that Kentucky was famous for bourbon."

"Making whiskey is as American as baking an apple pie. Anyway, the reason we need to talk is I located a company with sleighs."

"Where is it?"

"Nashville. I'm guessing about 900 miles/20 hours one way. I figured if we left around noon tomorrow, we wouldn't be back until Friday morning."

"Drive straight through?"

"Then lie over, get some rest and head back. Lately the National Weather Service hasn't been too accurate. I'm afraid we might get caught in a storm on the way back."

"And I'm here, because?"

"I want your opinion. Should we risk it or wait until spring?"

"What happens if you don't go?"

"Nothing as far as our farm goes; we bought a dozen Arctic Cat snowmobiles. We can get around fine regardless of the snow."

"Marilyn what do you think?"

"Buy some snowmobiles. I don't want you two on the road in case that storm comes in early."

"Where can we get gas for snowmobiles?"

"You already have it, they burn E85."

"Up to you Dan"

"If we go, the snow will come early and if we don't it could be late."

"Screw it; we'll just buy some snowmobiles. If we go the other way, Murphy will get us for sure."

"Want to run over to Garden City tomorrow and see what they have?"

"I get Ray to go with us so they can get some too."

"What's the deal on Hank?"

"He proposed and Rachel accepted; they'll probably get married in early spring, according to Rachel."

"This is going to be fun, you know."

"How's that?"

"All Chiefs and very few Indians."

"I was thinking about that, there are a lot of hard working men looking for jobs; we should be able to get all the labor we want. I was also thinking of increasing the gardens to 40 acres per farm. What do you say?"

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained. But I think we might want to keep the shine at 12 barrels."

"I thought we were going to 24 barrel," June complained.

"We talked about that, but I think it's just too risky."

"We'd better get home. Pick you up around 10 in the big truck?"

"Sure, I'll be ready."

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Rachel wanted 4 and Gunny and Marilyn 4 more. Marilyn told him more was better and he ended up with the last 12 Arctic Cats the dealer had in inventory with the 4 cycle, E85 rated engine. Due to the lack of a growing season, the price of E85 had slipped up about a buck a gallon. The dealer also had a shipment of new sleds come in, the Magnum Otter sleds. We bought the whole shipment, 24. We could move 3 bales of hay per sled if it became necessary. It took us 2 trips to get everything back to the farms.

My fellow Americans.

The Country has experienced a substantial recovery since the war, yet much remains to be done. I come to you tonight with concerns over the food supply.

With the loss of substantial portions of our coastline, citrus production has fallen sharply. The shortened summer has affected crop production even more significantly. For the first time in recent memory, the United States is experiencing a shortage of foodstuffs.

Climatologists are predicting that we could experience shortened growing seasons and longer winters for the next 10 years, possibly longer. This weather pattern has been documented to be worldwide, affecting nearly every Country.

Nature has a way of healing herself and lowered temperatures are already causing reformation of the polar icecaps and the icecap in Greenland. As frozen moisture accumulates, the salinity of the oceans will increase and eventually, the Gulf Stream will rise. However, predictions are that it will take more than a century for the ocean levels to fall to the point where we recover major portions of our coast.

In the aftermath of the war, your government attempted to redistribute food resources with devastating results. No such attempt is contemplated in the current situation. Working with various land-grant colleges, short season crops have been developed and seed will be available in early spring to allow farmers to plant the improved varieties.

Working together, we can solve this crisis and meet our needs and begin helping other countries around the world to feed their populations. Absent that, the alternative is too terrible to imagine.

A Lady for All Seasons – Chapter 10

"What did he mean by that?" Jim asked.

"Jim, starving people will do whatever it takes to get food and governments will do whatever it takes to keep their people from starving. Much of the land mass of the world isn't suitable for growing large quantities of food. What he implied was that the have-nots will take from the haves, using whatever force is required," Dan explained.

"Pope Urban in 1095, on the eve of the First Crusade, wrote, 'for this land which you now inhabit, shut in on all sides by the sea and the mountain peaks, is too narrow for your large population; it scarcely furnishes food enough for its cultivators. Hence it is that you murder and devour one another, that you wage wars, and that many among you perish in civil strife. Let hatred, therefore, depart from among you; let your quarrels end. Enter upon the road to the Holy Sepulcher; wrest that land from a wicked race, and subject it to yourselves.' This was one of the earliest expressions of what has come to be called the Malthusian theory of war, in which wars are caused by expanding populations and limited resources. Thomas Malthus wrote that populations always increase until they are limited by war, disease, or famine," Gunny continued.

"That doesn't make much sense; it takes a lot of resources to fight a war."

"That was the Pope's point; however, the hope is to gain new growing areas capable of producing more food."

"And in the meantime, the population is reduced by the war."

"Now you understand. War makes no sense at all and yet, wars have been fought since the dawn of civilization, not always over a political ideology."

"Coming from 2 professional soldiers, I'm surprised to hear that."

"Just because we learned how to wage an effective war, doesn't mean that we didn't learn why they occurred. Modern wars are mostly about political ideology, but the world in 2016 isn't the same as it was at the turn of the century."

"Jim, we learned to fight limited wars where they could end as quickly as they began. Soldiers serve at the pleasure of the Commander-in-Chief and him at the pleasure of the people."

"And yet, with the supplies in that Quonset hut, the two of you seemed prepared to fight another war."

"Those supplies are what are called preparations. Among the 3 farms, we have nearly 2,000 acres of fertile land to protect against any and all who would seek to steal from us. We aren't looking for trouble, but if it comes, we're ready."

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The winter of 2016-2017 came very early but the snowfall wasn't nearly as heavy as the previous year. Had they gone to Nashville, they've have gotten caught in a terrible storm before they made it home, the next storm came in on Thursday and it was a blizzard.

I noticed that Jim had been very impressed by the lesson provided by Dan and Gunny. I believe he finally understood the maxim, *Si vis pacem, para bellum*. - *If you want peace, prepare for war*. At the time, we had no idea that the food shortages around the Country were as severe as the President had implied in his speech. In view of the moderate snowfall, we began to prepare for a massive growing season in 2017. We were going to grow it all from dry beans to vegetables.

"Do you have any idea how big a 40 acre garden is kiddo? How are we going to handle that much land and food?"

"We'll plant as much of it as we can using the field equipment, Marilyn. I'm sure that people will be more than willing to work for a small share of the crop. There are 400 cases of mason jars in the warehouse and at least another 400 cases of used jars accumulating in town. If we have to can around the clock, we'll work in shifts."

"Where did you get the large pressure cookers?"

"Utah, the Canning Pantry. I have 8 canners and at 19 quarts per canner, we do 152 quarts per batch. I think we'd better order two truckloads of quart jars, though, this is starting to take on commercial proportions."

"Why use the expensive jars?"

"Because we can recycle them and buying wholesale, they aren't that expensive to begin with. We had many of them that ended up in the hands of people who kept them and used them to can the production of their own gardens. At this point, Lakin and Garden City are pretty well saturated and the numbers that are being recycled is increasing. All we have to buy larger quantities of is lids."

"Well, I do have the old stove in the basement that I use for things like rendering the lard."

"That gives you 8 burners, Marilyn. Rachel has a second stove in her basement doesn't she?"

"Yes she does. I see what you're getting at, among the 3 families, we have lots of burners and every burner can process 19 quarts. But, June, that's a lot of hand work getting the things ready to can."

"I know, we've used high school students but may have to hire people besides, for a share of what we produce," I explained.

"There has to be a better way to do this."

"What did you have in mind?"

"How about getting another Quonset hut? We could use two the size of your warehouse?"

"And erect them where?"

"We don't have any Quonset huts set up, there would be room for one or two next to our machine shed."

"I'm listening."

"We could put a row of countertop burners down each side, one for pots to scald the jars in and the other for the canners. We could have a prep area where the produce is prepared, the canning area and finally a third area where the jars cool and are boxed. I don't want to tie up my entire home in a canning operation as big as it's going to take with 1200 acres of gardens."

She had a point and because of Paul's father, the ability to implement it. The six of us, Hank and Rachel, Marilyn and Gunny and Dan and I sat down and carefully went through the various planning stages. Dan said that the huts were available and could be erected during the winter, although probably not on slabs. We would use one warehouse for processing and the other to store jars and finished goods. We'd combine my canners with 16 more that Rachel and Marilyn were going to order, allowing us to run 24 pressure cookers at once, each containing 19 quart jars or the 32 pint jars.

Depending on the output of the garden, we'd just run a day shift and process 1,368 quarts a day. We could go through 400 cases of quarts in 4 days. The inventory of used jars was closer to 600 cases and new was 400 cases. I'd order ahead and we'd store as many as we had room, both quarts and pints. While I was at it, I'd order several cases of lids. Maybe I could get them in a bulk pack as opposed to the small boxes that only held a dozen. I knew where I could buy them packed 60 dozen to the case, 720 lids.

We decided to pack pickles in all 3 flavors in pint jars because few people ate a quart of pickles in one sitting. For ease of processing, we'd only can sliced pickles, varying the spices to produce the various flavors. We had plenty of recipes, but were going to use our own. We checked with two of the grocery stores and learned how much they typically sold of various canned products. This would be the basis for the proportions of the various crops we planted to produce canning vegetables.

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We had everything decided before Thanksgiving. It seemed later, more like February, but that's what happens when winter comes early, like on August 28th. We'd had 5 blizzards before Thanksgiving, blizzards because of the wind that came with them, not the amount of snowfall. I don't suppose the total snowfall was much more than 15", above normal but not like the previous year. That particular Indian need a very tall stump, this Indian didn't need the stump, yet. I suppose my biggest concern was the supply of bio-diesel because we hadn't produced any this summer, lacking crops.

We were on generator power about half of the time and on one of the various turbines, usually the big one, the remainder of the time. This was where Hank and Rachel had one up on us; they could almost get through the downtime on the turbines with the solar panels, batteries and small generator. On the other side of the coin, it wasn't us who ran into problems the previous year with heavy snow and high wind preventing clearing the machine shed roof. It seemed to me that there wasn't any one perfect answer.

The question on how to handle the boys' new guns had been resolved, we gave the guns and ammo to Jason and Karen told them to handle it however they liked. And to get the boys set up with Gunny for shooting practice. And speaking of Gunny, he said the only thing he got out of *Heartbreak Ridge* was Tom Highway's motto: *improvise, adapt and overcome*.

Getting the sleighs hadn't been as hard as envisioned, when the phones were up, we contracted the guy in Nashville and ordered enough for the 3 farms. If things went as envisioned in our planning meetings, the only use the tractors would get would be preparing the land and cultivating, it was time to switch to the Clydesdales and saddle horses.

We also planned on making some Pepper Jack this year, the Colby and Monterey Jack cheese had been well accepted, while the Havarti pepper cheese hadn't. We had enough stored for years. The Colby was popular because it was mild, but it wouldn't have taken much to vary the recipe and replace the Colby with regular cheddar. Anything we couldn't sell would be allowed to age. We didn't get turkeys this year and were planning on having roasting hens for Thanksgiving and a ham at Christmas.

Jason said he wanted time off around Christmas to visit his folks and Karen's family. That was perfectly ok, John and Jim could handle the milking and Dan could process the half of the milk that was going into cheese. If the creamery couldn't pick up the milk we sold, we could always turn that into cheese too. He said that they'd decided to tell the boys the rifles and shotguns were gifts from the farm, rewards for a job well done.

I couldn't have done better, picking Jason to manage the farm. They stopped having kids when Karen got the daughter she wanted; they named her Suzanne. Susan was expecting her 4th child; we snickered that they ought to get a TV. Mary had a second and a third, both boys. Jim and Julia were spacing the babies out, I just found out she was expecting for the second time. She was hoping for a daughter, this time and said if

they had a girl, she'd probably stop having babies. Having all the kids would solve a part of our labor problem, in about 10 years. John and Mary's kids were Randy, John and Jacob, named for John's father. Jim and Julia only had Jimmy. Those cloth diapers had been one of the best investments I'd ever made.

Jason and Karen had 4 kids, Jason, Daniel, Robert and Suzanne. Ray and Susan's 3 kids were named Raymond, Michael and Rachel. Who did I miss? Oh, Don and Sandy's kids were name Maria and Paul.

Kearny County was still debating erecting a memorial to its fallen heroes. They had several issues to resolve, where to put it and what it would look like. And then there was the cost. In 3 years, they'd only managed to agree to erect a memorial but were unable to agree on the other issues. They were looking at the Vietnam Memorial for inspiration. In addition to The Wall, there was the Three Servicemen Statue, The Vietnam Women's Memorial (statue) and the In Memory Plaque, added in 2004. One problem they couldn't seem to overcome was that the people on *our side* who were killed were mostly Reserve Deputy Sheriff's, representing all walks of life. It appeared that they might go with a plaque, listing the names of the fallen. The family of the farmer who owned the farm where the fight had occurred didn't want interlopers intruding on their privacy.

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"Mom, these diapers are getting very threadbare, where can we get more?"

"I'll have to look, Mary. I got those in Garden City. Maybe Dan and I will go shopping tomorrow."

"On the day after Thanksgiving, you'd have to be nuts."

"Lots of sales tomorrow. We'll see if I can get enough for both you and Julia."

"I would appreciate it."

"I know you would dear, what do you want for Christmas?"

"A lump of coal in my sock, that old house is hard to heat."

"I'll call and get you another load."

"Thanks. Can you tell me something? What is the difference between LNG and Propane?"

"Propane is LPG and is a component of LNG. LNG is cryogenic, very cold and when warmed, converts to natural gas which is mostly methane. If you've ever looked at the energy requirements for generators, it's easy to tell that propane contains more energy than natural gas. The same generator might produce 13kw on natural gas but 15kw on

propane. The percentage of propane in natural gas or LNG is a primary factor in determining the amount of energy the gas contains."

"Anyway, thanks for the coal."

"I'll have them bring you two loads if you have John clear a spot next to the coal chute and put down a tarp. There are plenty of tarps in the machine shed. Dan and I talked about putting in a second load of coal on each homestead and covering it with tarps, but didn't do it. I can see now, that we should have. You have plenty of wood, don't you?"

"Yes, but the furnace goes out during the night on wood."

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"Dan, John and Mary are out of coal, I'm going to have all of our coal rooms topped off and get a second load of coal like we discussed."

"I dropped the ball on that one, didn't I?"

"I'm the one who orders the coal, blame me."

"Fine, we both screwed up. I'll dig the tarps out tomorrow and distribute them."

"No you won't."

"Why not?"

"We're going shopping tomorrow. We need to look for Christmas presents for the grandchildren and more of the cloth diapers. I told Mary to have John get tarps from the machine shed."

"When do Gunny and Marilyn want those Quonset warehouses put in?"

"Probably after the first of the year. It doesn't make a lot of difference, does it; the ground is frozen as hard as a brick."

"But it is a definite go, right?"

"Yes."

"I'll call him and have him line up the 2 warehouses."

"Line up a propane tank, the space heaters and the countertop burners while you're at it. Gunny and you can build the processing and cooking facilities over the course of the winter provided you have space heaters and propane."

"What about the jars and lids?"

"I ordered those for March delivery. Marilyn put in an order for 16 of the big pressure cookers. We're going to have to give some consideration to what we need for processing equipment too. We're going to need some kind of commercial slicer that's adjustable to cut up the cucumbers, carrots and beets."

"How many jars did you order?"

"I ordered 1,000 cases of quarts and 1,000 cases of pints. I did find Ball lids loose packed, they were special order. Because they have a 5 year shelf life, I ordered enough for 2 years for 3,000 cases of jars per year."

"What?"

"Did I stammer?"

"No, but..."

"You would be surprised how cheaply they can be bought in 1,000 case units."

It just sounded like a lot of jars. According to one source on Walton Feed, a family of 4 would require something like 500+ jars a season to can just for them. If you divided 12,000 by 500, you'd realize that you are only talking about enough jars for 24 families. If you added the new quarts we already had, 400 cases, and the recycled jars we had to pick up, 600 cases, you were talking about 24,000 jars, or 1,263 canner loads. Running 24 canners at a time, 3 times a shift meant we had roughly an 18-day supply of quart jars and a 9-day supply of pint jars, 4-5 day weeks.

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"Do you have more in the back?"

"Yes, of course, but, the limit is 6 dozen per customer."

"I have 6 dozen and that gentleman just took 6 dozen. Your shelf is a bit bare, I was just curious."

"Do they have more?"

"We'll give her a few minutes to restock the shelf and make a second pass, Dan. In the meanwhile, we can look for a commercial slicer."

"I looked in the Yellow Pages; we're going to have to look on the internet."

"Are the two of you together, there's a limit of 6 packages?"

"Him? No, I just met him in line."

"Just met me in line?"

"I had to say something, dear. You wouldn't think a store would be so picky about limits on the day after Thanksgiving."

"Let's have lunch and come back."

"Ok. Say, what do you want for Christmas?"

"I can't think of a thing, just get me some clothes for daily wear. You probably know what I need better than I do. What do you want?"

"A good growing season this coming year."

"I'm sorry, I don't have His number."

"Who's number?"

"God's."

We had lunch and went back to the store to get the other gross of diapers, going through a different checkout this time. I planned on underwear, jeans and shirts for Dan. I'd make up a list of things that I needed to fill in clothes wise and he could pick anything on the list. His preferred outerwear in the winter was a military parka with the wolf fur trim. They hadn't been politically correct for the better part of 50 years.

o

I wanted to get June the current issue Gortex parka, but it wasn't on her list. I knew where I could buy them and they were on sale at less than half price. The MSPR was around \$350, but these were available for \$150. I rationalized that I was saving enough money on the coat to pay for everything she did have on her list. She had omitted underwear from her list, probably something she wanted to try on to ensure proper fit.

I ordered one with the liner and a pair of Gortex pants. I added jeans, blouses and socks. June was doing the grandchildren and I wanted to something extra for the kids, e.g., Jim and Mary and their spouses. I rather fancied the Cold Steel Military Classic. They were a bit expensive, but they had a good sheath and a stone. Not a large blade at 7" but they could serve as both a hunting knife and a fighting knife.

Hunger was becoming a problem in some parts of the US as the winter wore on. It was like after the war but related to a climate problem. I wouldn't doubt that more than one family was happy to have Spam for Christmas dinner. Make all the jokes you want

about the product, but in many places around the world, Spam had been a favorite product. Sometimes, June would fix it sliced and fried with eggs. I'd rather have that than a MRE.

We'd run plenty of meat through the locker plant and sold all the steers and extra hogs to the plant in Garden City. We bottled the bourbon when it passed the taste test and sold out 180 cases in a single day. To save fuel, we brought back lumber, counter top burners and plumbing supplies. We could get another propane tank and fuel whenever we wanted it. As far as the cooktops went, we bought the cheapest we could find, Admiral 30" with 9,000BTU burners. We'd also need stainless steel counters for the preparations area, a standard restaurant kitchen item.

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I'll swear the things men think that a lady needs. I hadn't expected a parka and the leggings that went with them. The jeans, blouses and socks, yes, but not a parka. It was fine for riding the snowmobiles, but it was too warm to work in. It was rated to -50° F, and if it got that cold, I wasn't going anywhere. At least he bought one for himself. He was, however, content to wear the 50 year old parka most of the time.

The diapers and pins were greatly appreciated, presents for the babies to be. Dan got them knives saying they were hunting knives, but the label on the box contradicted him, they were fighting knives. Randy always said if you got close enough to an opponent that you had to use a knife, you were far too close. Gunny and he had been huddling since they came back with the lumber, plumbing and cooktops. Dan said they were figuring out how to layout the canning huts, but if you ask me, they were also figuring out how to defend the 3 farms should it come to that.

When the war came, there was a reasonable amount of food in the supply chain and it took 3 years before the government was forced, they claim, into redistribution. Grain destined for livestock feed was available to be reroute into food for human consumption. This was far different; the year without a real summer we experienced cut the Country to the bone. Sadly, 7 years after the war, nature ganged up on humanity, making us pay for 100 years of excesses. I caught a satellite image of the Country on TV; it was hard to recognize it as the good old US of A.

◦

It took a lot of planning, the canners were heavy and putting 4 on a cooktop concentrated a whole bunch of weight. We finally decided to build the counters out of 3 laminations of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood topped with Formica. The counter top looked like a piece of Swiss cheese when it was ready to accept the cooktops. We spaced them as closely as we dared; even so, each took about 5'. The cooking area was just 16' out of the 100'. We devoted 56' for the preparation area and the other 28' for cooling and boxing. We wouldn't be running any space heater while we were canning, more likely an air conditioner, a very large air conditioner.

"I'm not sure about this Gunny. There is no way that June can possibly lift a full canner onto a cooktop."

"You'd be surprised, Dan, your wife is pretty feisty."

"The canner weighs 33 pounds. How much would 19 quarts or 32 pints of produce weigh? If I recall correctly, close to 100 pounds altogether."

"How did they do it in previous years?"

"One on each side."

"There's plenty of room for them to work, but I think we should get them carts to move the canners around."

"Are we being foolish? I mean, we have the capacity to can up to 12k pints and 36k quarts in just a month."

"And, God willing, we'll have 120 acres of garden. I don't know about you, but I'll be very glad when summer is all over."

"I smell trouble, there are hungry people around the Country and the US is the bread-basket of the world."

"What did Marie Antoinette say, 'If the people are hungry, let them eat cake?'"

"After learning of the bread shortages that were occurring in Paris at the time of Louis XVI's coronation in Rheims, tradition persists that Marie Antoinette joked 'If they have no bread, then let them eat cake!' – or simply Qu'ils mangent de la brioche – Let them eat cake.' It's not so, that remark was recorded when she was only 10 years old. She wasn't even French, but an Austrian."

"Nonetheless, we'd better give some thought to defending our crops, assuming we do get crops."

"We have the equipment in my Quonset hut; all we need is trained operators, Gunny."